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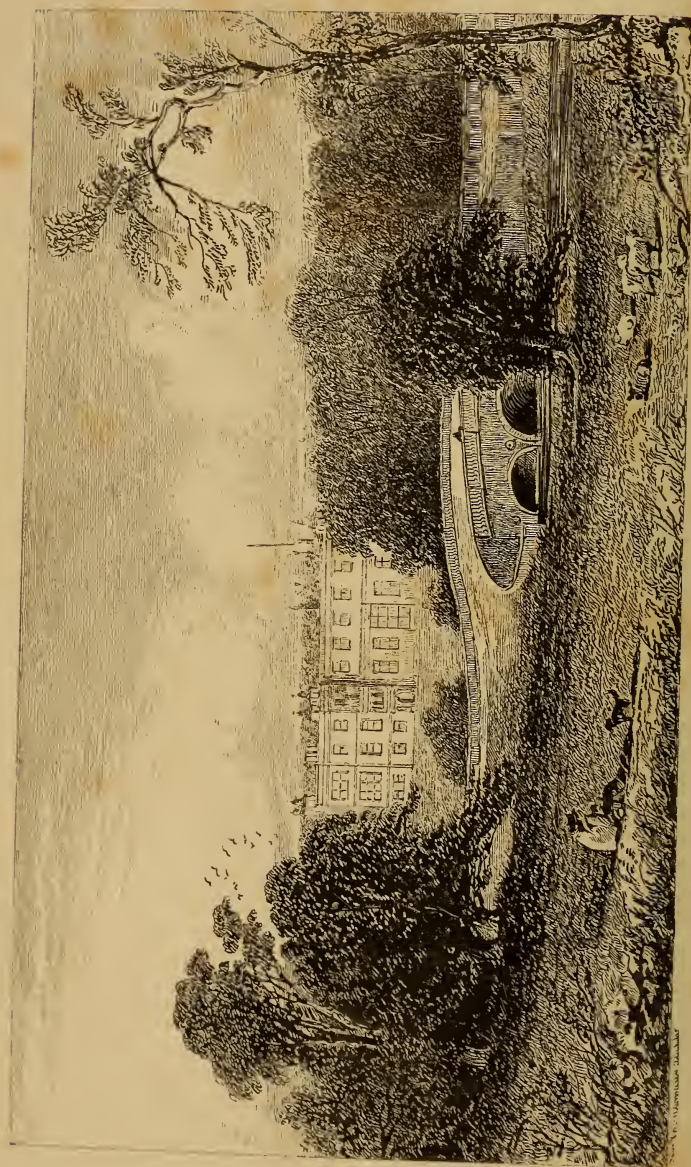


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AUDLEY END.

SKETCHES  
OF  
**SAFFRON WALDEN**

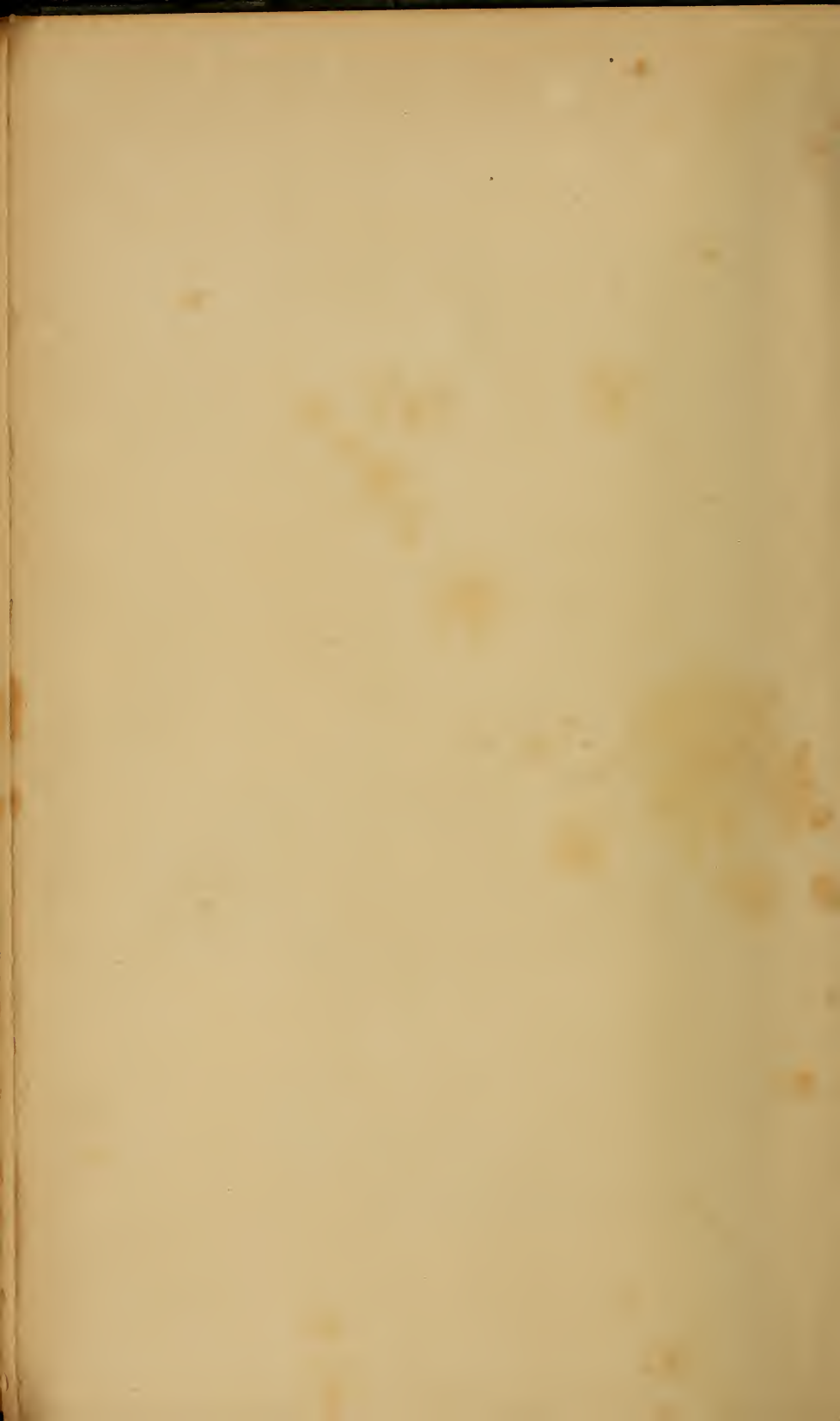
AND  
ITS VICINITY.

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THE CASTLE.

1845.





SKETCHES  
OF  
SAFFRON WALDEN,  
AND ITS VICINITY:

BY  
JOHN PLAYER,  
*Author of "Home," &c.,*

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS  
BY  
JOHN MALLOWS YOUNGMAN.



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SAFFRON WALDEN:  
PRINTED AND SOLD BY G. YOUNGMAN, BOOKSELLER.  
1845.

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## P R E F A C E .

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THE following papers were originally printed in the ESSEX HERALD, and most of them in the CHELMSFORD CHRONICLE, two Journals of considerable repute in this county. They have therefore had already a circulation far beyond the locality which supplied the matter: but their chief interest must naturally be felt, and be best appreciated, in the Town where they were written, and in its immediate vicinity. The approval of some whom the writer very highly regards, has been the leading inducement to their being printed in a separate form; and he indulges a hope that, till some work better suited to the purpose of a local guide shall be published, this may be regarded, in a stranger's hand, in the light of a humble substitute. His earnest desire is that the "SKETCHES" may continue to interest, not only his intelligent fellow-townsmen, but those also who may visit the place, and find pleasure in contemplating the scenery which he has observed, with affectionate regard, from some of his earliest years.

The Illustrations by a native artist, it is hoped, may be some recommendation to a work of this description: and while the writer congratulates himself that his papers are accompanied by such proofs of the correctness of his own views, he trusts that others will be induced to stop and admire, where his own delineations give but an imperfect character of the objects he has attempted to sketch.

*Saffron Walden,*

*May 1st, 1845.*

22 d-23

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## SKETCHES IN ESSEX.

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### No. 1.—AUDLEY END.

SURELY the month of May is the most delightful of all periods in the year, to seek the liberty of the fields, and to remark the beauties of the natural world. How agreeable is the verdure, variegated with flowers familiar to us from childhood! The daisy, the butter-cup, and the paele, the sweet flowers of infancy, with which we once struggled to fill the little lap, are now decking the park and the pasture with the characteristic imagery of spring.

Entering the Park from the Abbey Lane, Saffron Walden, we pass the row of young limes on either hand, dressed in their earliest shade of annual green. Interesting indeed is the view, after advancing a hundred paces within the gates. The grazing cattle in the pasturage around—the deer on the hill to the north—the fields, the cultivated fields, far beyond the Park to the left of the Suffolk Column—the noble House of Audley End, peeping up from the vale westward—Lord Howard's Temple, to commemorate the restoration to health of George III.—the thriving trees, the oak, the beech,—all, all deeply interest the observant pedestrian. Looking backwards, we perceive, beneath the

arching branches of those spreading trees, the Church spire—an interesting feature in our local landscape at every point. We have now ascended the acclivity near to the Ice-house, and then again have descended to the road, passing one of the neat and pretty Lodges, built by the present Lord Braybrooke, for utility and ornament to this noble domain.

In the Audley End road, another pleasing view bursts upon the eye. Shortgrove grounds, Wenden, &c., to the left, the hamlet of Audley End to the right, with the farmhouse in the vale, held by Mr Alderman Smith. Cultivation is associated with plantations, and varied wood and verdure, so as to form a fit subject of meditation for the practical man, as well as the contemplative members of God's vast family. When, too, with the walks and hills, we are enabled to associate the enrapturing pleasure with which we traced them in the buoyant days of boyhood, and see the same glorious sun that cheered our path then, now gilding the hedges, the banks, and the sloping corn fields, we observe them with an intensity of feeling which cannot be expressed.

Following the course of the old lichened wall that bounds this portion of the Park, we see on the right the beautiful limes towering high, their lower branches spreading across the path, and forming a pleasant shade. When these noble trees are in blossom, and the bees are busy among the branches, how sweet is the air! how rich with natural perfume! On the left is a majestic fir tree, tapering to its summit, and fringed down to its projecting base, worthy of being a part of one of those local views, which, every spring, are exhibited to many an admiring eye, in London's vast town. Here, in the road, and along its parallel greensward, in our youthful days, a country-fair was held in the month of August. It is said to be transfer-





SAFFRON WALDEN CHURCH.  
FROM THE PARK.

PAINTER'S PATENT GLYPHOGRAPHY.



red and continued on Walden Common ; but the fair now, and then—we speak of fifty years ago—is not the same thing. There was a show, perhaps, and something of the mummary of the day : but there were cheese-stalls, and gingerbread dealers—comparatively few people—great good-humour—boughs projecting from the cottagers' homes, denoting that a glass of beer and a slice of ham might be had within—children blowing wooden trumpets, and holiday-folk in holiday clothes ; and in the afternoon and evening, such an admixture of sober sedateness with light-hearted, innocent jollity, that the whole scene was worthy of Wilkie's pencil ; but it is now gone by as a feature of the last century, and soon will be forgotten, as those who witnessed it die off, and bury its remembrance with other trifles that are past.

Going further, we reach, after passing the principal entrance, surmounted by a noble lion, the bridge which spans the Granta. There we see in the back-ground, eastward, the princely Mansion. It is a gem—a rare gem—and ought to be admired. On the north, the old Elysium gardens are broken up and gone ; but they were pleasant in our earlier days. To the privileged few, enjoying retirement and a book, on a summer's morning, it was a sweet retreat from the din and turmoil of busy life. The stream that passed through, and the greensward, are the same ; and nature, unassisted, still revels with its soft and pleasant airs, among the trees that surround this well-known spot.

Leaving the bridge, and entering the parish of Littlebury, there is the transparent limpid brook, which still bubbles up as it did in our younger life, when its pure affusions were so grateful to the rambling boy : it was indeed welcome, before pledges of temperance were ever heard or thought of ; and suited well with their pursuits who had no idle funds to draw upon at a moment's notice, in a local ramble.

Pursuing the road towards Littlebury, we have there a good view of Lord Braybrooke's abode, with its lawn and river frontage, and much do we admire it. We have had opportunities of dwelling upon its beauties internally, and of sharing in the kindness and hospitality of its noble inmates—and upon these we could dwell with grateful pleasure—but this would prematurely shorten our morning's ramble; and therefore we proceed on to the Littlebury Lodge. There a new one, with cheerful bay windows, and an elevated tower, is just finishing on the northern side, to supplant, we presume, the elderly lady who was always hitherto soberly placed, beneath the protecting shade of the lofty wall. It is a change, indeed, for the better, and indicative of the growing taste of the noble owner, and would form also a pretty vignette or tail-piece, should his lordship publish a second edition of his interesting book on Audley End. On the left of the road the plantation towards the Aviary has been thinned; and there lie many of the trees of an age gone by, reminding the passing traveller that he too shall lie as low—or lower still—in a short period; proving that the life of man, in the best estate, is soon no more than a brief epistle from a distant country, or a tale that is told.

At the extremity of the road the village Church of Littlebury shews its tower above the trees in the foreground; while the fields on the right and left of the road, are marked with the produce of the rising year. Time was when the highway went according to landscape gardening—in a curve to the left, and over hill and dale: now, like a Newmarket cut, it is straight as an arrow, and the coach-and-four is viewed for many minutes before it reaches the spot at the one-floor lodge, by which we turn to the Duck-street entrance into the Park. There are the kitchen-gardens, and the arboretum on the right, and on the opposite side, the

farm, bounded by the ever-flowing watercourse, which issues from the Park. Then, again, we enter upon a sweet and tranquil scene, bounded on the north side by the deer-park, and its luxuriant trees and crowning groves: while we saunter undisturbedly by the margin of the separating stream; but cheered by its rippling contributions to the harmony—the natural harmony—of the morning hour. The path through the park is a pleasant stroll to the contemplative mind, while the many are busying themselves in life's active duties, and think not, perhaps, that the beauties of creation are unfolding themselves every moment to invite them abroad.

Leaving the Park, we pass the newly-erected Almshouses upon King Edward's foundation. Some of the aged inmates are sunning themselves, seated in the recesses by the gravel walk; while the foreground is richly decorated with flower-beds and the verdant plat. It is a noble effort of charity—charity's brightest emanation—to see the aged of both sexes thus relieved from the anxieties of life, and charmed to fulness with the pleasures of a retreat, with which but few can compare. It is an interesting conclusion to a charming walk, which, at this lovely season, may well be recommended to others. Yet there are but few, perhaps, who can look upon the whole with the eye that memory fondly assists to enrich it with past joys and beauties that can never fade, while intellect holds its empire, and remembrance is charmed by many dear and heartstirring recollections of the past.

*Saffron Walden, May 16th, 1843.*



## No. 2.—DEBDEN PARK.

---

WHICHEVER way your inclination leads, it is equally pleasant to stroll in the vicinity of a town like Saffron Walden—seated amid the undulations of very fertile lands—when the fields and the trees are just dressed out in the beautiful verdure and foliage of spring. A resident naturally varies his walks:—sometimes he repairs to the retired lane, and wanders along the edge of the arable land, now covered over with young corn: at others he seeks the eminence, whence he may look around, and take in as much as the eye can compass at one sweet survey. Thus influenced, we, who have our beloved domicile in the midst of the valley, direct our steps to the descent into the town from the London road, where to the south is the way to Debden. To reach that point where the descent begins, we have naturally to ascend to the opening road which leads to this rural village; and the ascent continues, with slight variations, for a considerable distance. The asthmatic patient need not, however, be dispirited at the hill before him, if, by gentle effort, he ventures with us.

As soon as we pass the cottages on the right, and Mr. Bird's Lime-kiln beyond—(by the bye, chalk and lime are known to the children here before they learn their letters, although



LANE SCENE, DEBDEN.

WILKINSON'S PATENT GLYPTOGRAPHY.



we have an infant-school or two—palings and doors shew the utility of chalk in various striking characters, but seldom understood by more learned hands)—the hedge and the bank begin, which on one side of the way are shortly interrupted by conspicuous buildings termed Mount Pleasant; and truly these humble residences are among the most agreeable in the locality for variety of view and healthiness of situation. On a fine spring morning, when the window is opened, and the pure air is inhaled, unalloyed by any unseemly exhalation or prejudicial miasma, while the lark sweetly carols to the sky—the lovely beauteous dome spread over the fair scene of natural life by the Almighty Architect of the Universe—it must be a senseless clod of humanity indeed to behold the scene unmoved, and to cast the perceptions around without some fine thought, such as Cowper's, when he gratefully wrote—

“My Father made them all!”

Passing along—with an occasional glance on either side—we come to the milestone. It is on the hedgeside of a pretty piece of greensward; and there it has stood faithfully, through storm and sunshine, through summer and winter, for many a year. It is an old friend to us; for it was there in our boyish days, when that same bit of greensward won for a time the marked attention of the playmates let loose from the trammellings of school, in order to enjoy—oh! how deeply!—the pure breathings of the fields and groves. We cared not for this money-getting world, for we had a pleasant world of our own—and there we revelled till hunger's demands led us home again.

On the left, we see the old bricked pest-house, with its young-born poplars, removed some distance from the road, up a green lane, surrounded by fields. High and elevated,

it was doubtless posted there, to catch the breezes, and to bear away the pestilential atmosphere of its occasional inmates into thin air, till rendered harmless by its general diffusion. When we read of the ravages in former times of the plague and the small-pox, before science had so mitigated their effects, we can imagine the horror which led a small community to consign the lovely child, or the venerated parent, to a lonely abode in the fields, there to waver between life and death, till danger as to others appeared to have gone by. Isolated from all they loved, it seems as if they were placed there that they might be weaned from the earth and the living, before malady could accomplish its intended sacrifice. Latterly, the house has been appropriated only to some cases of small-pox; but it stands a memento of the past—of that age or ages, when pestilence stalked through the land, with all its heart-rending and uprooting consequences.

Look to the right at the joyous view for many miles, and past days are for a while forgotten. The lark is mounting with its sweetest song, as if he revelled in the glorious expanse, and felt his freedom. The lands are all cultivated lands—neither heath nor waste is there—and the eye sometimes rests on the groves and trees of Audley End and Littlebury Green,—then sweeps along in the direction of Newport and Debden, or hovers about the retired rustic residence, of which very few mark the landscape in this vicinity. On the left is a thrifty plantation of young larch, and the nightingale sweetly warbles from his favourite haunt; the sound of approaching horsemen is heard for some time ere they come in view, but the nightingale sings on undisturbedly in his beautiful home.

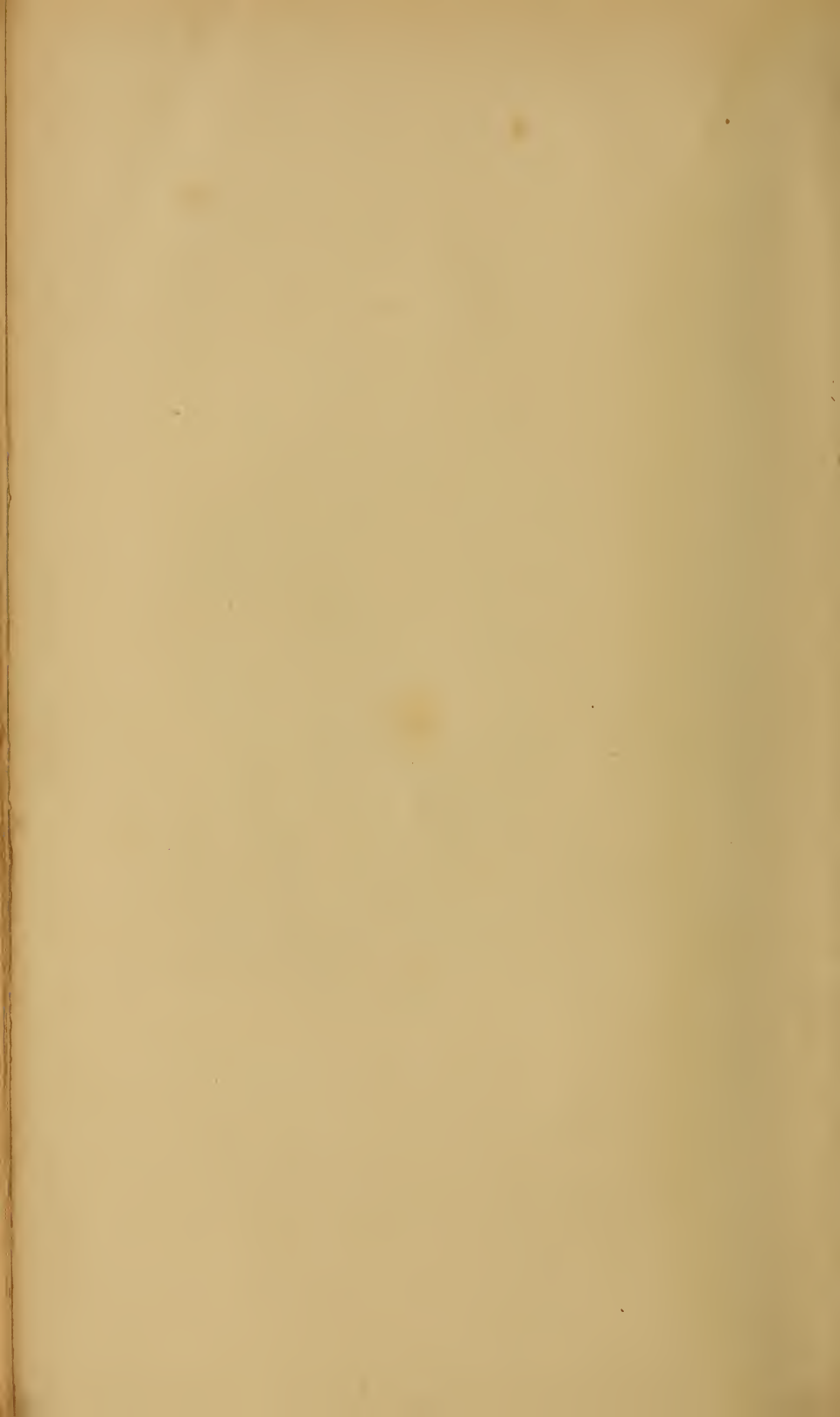
Tracking the road a few furlongs more—with here and there a turn or an elbow—we pass the Clay-pits—a well-





THE CLAY PITS.

PALMER'S PATENT GLYPHOGRAPHY



known spot—with an entrance from the road, worthy of the artist's notice—and then come to a gate, whence we look over some of the fields of the Rosse farm, a part of Lord Braybrooke's estate. Down in the distance, Shortgrove's ornamental grounds attract attention ; but the view from this spot is free and pleasant, while in the vale is a water-course, along which, many a time and oft, in earlier life, with one companion of boyhood, now no more, we sought recreation in the meadows and rural paths—paths which, as then, are little visited, because of their remote direction : few trace them for convenience, and fewer still for simple enjoyment.

Descending the road, on the high banks of which are plantations of fir trees, we see the homestead belonging to the Rosse farm, now and for many a year occupied by a sensible man and worthy tenant, Mr. Turner Clarke.\* The brook—as fifty years ago—still runs unfettered across the road ; and to the left, in the direction of Wimbish and Thaxted, is the same broad green lane, verdant as ever. Years have altered it but little ; and here and there the wandering tribe may find a spot to pitch their tent, and suspend the kettle above the freeman's hearth, while the infantile Egyptians, unencumbered with bandages, may enjoy sweet nature's carpeting till wearied with a child's delight. But in a chase like this—unjostled by life's busy crowd—the contemplative can seek health in grateful exercise, with a degree of liberty not always attainable in fields and groves.

Pursuing the road, we soon come to Debden parish—of the straggling order, with farms and cottages here and there ; but where is the Church ? Let us wait awhile—the Rectory comes first : there, on the left, it is agreeably situ-

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\* Mr. Turner Clarke died April 30, 1844, having occupied the Rosse farm, or been a resident upon it, for upwards of 59 years.

ated, removed from the traveller's close observance. Honor be to its gentlemanly occupant! May that retirement which advancing years expressively demand be crowned by an enviable peace!

Turning to the right—the road from hence to Newport—we skirt the park, containing the manor house of Debden Hall. Remembrance traces its several occupants for fifty years or more, but rests with pleasure on the generous and open-hearted Magens, who now keeps warm the hospitable hearth of this modern mansion. Near by is the village Church—within the park. It is an agreeable scene—the home of thought—where we see God in his beautiful works, which spring has so lavishly scattered around, and then can offer holy and mental worship to the beneficent Creator to whom a temple is here devoted, so free from all the detracting buildings which so frequently surround it in populous parts. There is something irresistibly gratifying when we find a church like that of Debden, so removed from constant desecration, and in such sweet retirement, leading the mind from life's low grounds to immortality and heavenly peace. How different this to the din of cities, and the places of public business! Here let us muse awhile!—

“The holy calm absorbs  
Each wayward thought and every fruitless wish;  
While airs serene no troublous warrings raise,  
To interrupt the peace I here enjoy.”

*Saffron Walden, May 22nd, 1843.*

No. 3.—S H E D ' S L A N E .

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TRAVELLING folk in search of the picturesque very often go a great number of miles to see places not nearly so interesting, after all, as their own. Doubtless in this highly favoured country—and we know it too from personal observation—there are many parts which by being more favoured than others with local beauties, are favoured in return with due notice by the people aforesaid. When the season comes round to seek the indulgence of a rational curiosity, these quit their comfortable homes, to combat with many deficiencies in country quarters, yet with a dogged perseverance in the pursuit of the “sublime and beautiful,” that is amply repaid by the tone and energy imparted to the mind and feelings, for many days afterwards, if not months and years, by so desirable and healthful a change. A placid-spirit and a well-furnished pocket are highly essential in these picturesque wanderings : for, as it has frequently been said—whatever the young and sanguine may imagine—that no couple can live upon love only—so the “sublime and beautiful” are painfully exciting without a succession of those comfortable accommodations which have oftentimes most charmingly exhilarated us when far distant from home, and among new faces as well as new scenes ; but still there are disagreeables



in travelling—we would not willingly mention localities—it would not be fair after a lapse of years—and things may have wonderfully altered for the better—disagreeables arising out of ill-furnished apartments, bad attendance, and miserable supplies, that, in a lone situation, have strikingly convinced us that all is not gold that glitters, till we have wondered why we had cast ourselves into such a situation, leaving dear home, and all its concatenating essentials, to be so used, and to pay for it most dearly into the bargain. But to many a change is the pleasure of life; and thus, after proceeding another stage, perhaps, we have found all we could desire, and so hearty a welcome as to throw every care into the back-ground, upon which we closed our book of lamentations with a gratitude that might indeed be felt, but could not be expressed. Recollection reminds us of a few such changes, as we revert to Dartmouth, to Keswick, to Edinburgh, to Matlock, to Aldborough, and some other places where we have truly thought, when the day came for our departure, it was a pleasure to settle the bill, without at the same time discharging, for that was impossible, all the obligations arising from attentive, candid, and hospitable treatment, in a friendly, comfortable inn.

In our day-dreams of contemplative felicity, when we have looked at the clouds traversing the lovely heavens, we have thought insensibly of spots over which those self-same clouds might, in their rapid careerings, quickly dispose themselves, with peculiar delight—a delight, however, which, from various causes, may never more be excited, in our minds, by like scenes and similar treatment. To give indulgence still to the observant faculties we are thus led to think more and more of domestic haunts and local beauties. Yet this is no new indulgence; for often, after long protracted wanderings, and many recordings with diurnal full-

ness, we have come back to Essex and to home, feeling most deeply satisfied that, notwithstanding we had enjoyed many pleasing varieties of hill, dale, and woodland, those of our own place and neighbourhood were clearly entitled to our warmest and most affectionate admiration.

The ramble which we now propose to take is hard by our own hearth ; for a few minutes bring us to Shed's-lane. It is but a stone's throw—close by the Bury Hills and Mandeville's old Castle, and runs eastward, where the road commences which leads to Little Walden, and Linton, in Cambridgeshire. Mr. Nockolds's improving house and grounds are at the south corner, and the ropery and pound—the generally open pound—are on the north side. In a minute we come to the pond and the well-cultivated fields, both right and left, held by Mr. Seamer Spicer. But here we are nearly at our journey's end, for at the second or third gate on the north side, we stand imperceptibly to look and admire the sweet landscape before us. In order, however, to take in a more comprehensive survey, which is hardly necessary, we will pass those elms and mount the gate on the opposite side, not so much to rest as to be seated in the midst of one of the most interesting amphitheatres that nature ever formed. Oh ! it is rich with exquisite beauty at the present moment : the young corn is indeed green, and the trees and hedges are just clothed in their matchless attire. Fertility goes hand-in-hand with assiduous cultivation ; and the varied fields, with the intersecting allotments (those valued accessions to the cottager's comfort), appear like a vast garden, where our heavenly Father is ready and pleased to bless the laudable exertions of his diligent children. The gentle airs that rustle the corn, are breathing the hymn of gratitude to the Source of all goodness, and the happy lark bears it upward, in sweetest harmony,

till we lose the song in the heavens, while the notes are more deeply recorded upon the observant and grateful heart. Oh ! it is a holy theme to contemplate our Almighty Maker in his splendid works !—and this imparts a wondrous charm to all we see. The sun is shining with lovely influence over this extensive picture ; and the air is still freshened with recent rain, while the mind is harmonised by the expressive stillness that assists our contemplation.

Shed's-lane leads to Buckenoe barn, belonging to Byrd's farm, which farm stands in its new and diversified character more to the left. Success to its occupant ! may skill and application secure its reward ! By the side of the barn is an ample pond, constantly supplied with excellent water from its perennial spring, which would probably furnish the town with all it requires, should its future improvements render it desirable to convey it into the valley. To the right is St. Aylott's, with its old manor-house appendage—a moat ; now the homestead of one of Lord Braybrooke's farms. Southward is Sewer's End, its mill and dwellings, all elevated in the landscape in that direction. Near by is Pouns wood, and a field or two off, Pouns hall, another farm, where, in early days, lived (without any—the slightest disparagement to its present respectable occupant) an honest man, a guileless character, with the most amiable feelings. He is gone, many years ago, to his rest, and an unpretending child, an infant in his days, has lately followed him to glory.

The Union-house for a large district, a well-regulated one, with a part of it for a home—a quiet amply-provided home for some aged parishioners—is seen in the hollow by the Sewer's End road. If every such establishment were watched over by men of the same mind as those we have the happiness to know in connexion with this, poverty's pangs, in

the time of old age, would, we honestly believe, be few indeed.

Southward, on an eminence (when we look at it we are often reminded of Mount Parnassus), is Sheer-hill, a pleasantly-situated farm-house, formerly belonging to the Martin family, but now the property and residence of Mr. Waite Spicer, whose lady, seven years since, published an interesting volume, entitled "The Gem of Christian Peace, and other Poems." Here she may well enjoy *otium cum dignitate* in her pleasant retirement, not forgetting, we trust, that poetry of the mind, which throws so much interest around every comfortable home like that of Sheer-hill.

To its right, is the Thaxted road, running due south, separated in one part by Railey and other fields, from Middleditch's conspicuous mill in leaden-colour dress. In that direction, too, is the Pest-house and its attendant poplars, with Ruse's mill, in virgin white, new-topped since Youngman's sketch was made, which has been presented by him to the Saffron Walden Museum.

Looking westward, we see Shortgrove, Mount Pleasant, and the entrance to the town; also Audley End domain, with its woody elevations, with green pasturage and fields perceptible above the trees. More remote, are village localities and plantations; while nearer, going northward, is the Deer-park—always an interesting spot, both from site and associations. This park is bounded in front by Madgate slade, and on the right by the road leading to Cambridge. On the opposite side of the road are some of the parochial allotments, occupying Turner's charity-bequests, hired—beneficently hired—by Mr. Gibson, in order that, at a reduced rent, he might assist the town in carrying out the benevolent object of appropriating plots of good ground for the comfort and benefit of the poor. Oh! how admirable



they look ! How like one large garden ! What a sweet feature in the landscape ! And there in Warner's capacious field, belonging to Mr. Francis Gibson, we see more of these allotments. There is a luxury in wealth when its possessors lend themselves to encourage the useful among the ornamental. Lord Braybrooke, and all who have aided the allotment system, will have cause for the most gratifying reflections in consequence, even to the sundown of a long-continued life.

On the north, there is a fine sweep of productive tillage, with a variety of trees ; the uplands are peculiarly marked, while nearer in the perspective are Wesley wood and Wesley farm. Yes ! in boyhood the worthy dame whose family then occupied that prominent homestead, was kind—most kind—to our little scholastic troop. She was happy in seeing us happy ; but she kept bees, and on one memorable occasion they excited a fever amongst us, as we had previously, no doubt, excited one amongst them ; and they resented it. Their stings, though but surface ones, are perceptible still : acute as they were, they are not, however, so irritating as those unfeelingly inflicted by the ill-bred of the order mammalia. Beyond is Little Walden Park, and the country towards Linton ; while nearer is Grimsditch wood, to the left of Byrd's farm. The view all around embraces many miles—it is truly capacious ; and in the bosom of this, to us, deeply-interesting scene, is the town of Saffron Walden—old Saffron Walden, born, indeed, without our knowing when. It is here apparently a picturesque valley, for trees intersect the dwellings ; and as we raise the gratified vision on every hand, it rests for awhile on those, which in almost all directions, skirt the horizon.

Returning homewards but a few rods, and passing the elms already mentioned, we stop at Mr. Spicer's gate ; then

we have a better view of the northern side of the town and the beautiful spire of its well-known Church—the spire erected by the lamented and judicious Rickman—rising out of a clump of trees. We are still sufficiently elevated to observe the road of entrance to the town, where we see also the house in which we first thought of and completed a humble view of the pleasures of “Home.”

It is associations, many and varied, which render the scene, at this peculiar season, when every spot is verdant and beautiful, most deeply attractive. The hedges are covered with blossoms; indeed it is now everywhere pleasant—pleasant, too, is that picturesque cottage, built by Mr. Francis Gibson, at the foot of Lofts-lane, which must not be overlooked. It stands near to those meadows which were sweet retreats in youthful days. Memory lingers over them, in enrapturing reflections that revive many a dead thought, and give new spirit to many a dormant feeling.

Our sketch is but feeble compared with the panoramic view; and while we are sure that few towns or villages can present one more extensive or more beautiful, we are disposed to admit that the slightest colouring in excess, if that be perceptible—which we think is by no means the case—may reasonably be set down to early predilections, familiar observation, and a laudable partiality for the place where the heart was first led to feel the beauties of a country home.

*June, 1843.*



## No. 4.—ASHDON.

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ANY stranger approaching Saffron Walden in this direction, must think that the town is very pleasantly situated. The view from the north side of the Common, by which runs the public road to Ashdon and Haverhill, is sufficiently elevated to enable the eye to compass the lands on the south side, and to observe the properties which surround this place of public resort. There is a ridge, running parallel with the road, which forms a terrace beneath the embowering trees, planted in a double row along this, the upper side of the Common. This is an agreeable walk, except when the busy bustling housewives of the town send forth their household linen to be blown about, much to the alarm of timid horsemen and wayward cattle. Many remarks might be made upon the practice, but as we are now on a ramble, we think it best to forbear. Cleanly practices are, however, always to be commended; and certainly nothing is more distinguishing than to have well-bleached linen, one of the reasons, we presume, for thus exposing it to universal observation.

Leaving the Common we pass by Grove Place, to Copt-hall. The road all along commands an agreeable prospect; and unquestionably some of the pleasantest residences in

the vicinity are subject to the lowest rents. The grateful cottager may look upwards and around, on his return from daily labour, and while partaking too of his wholesome fare, and feel that his heavenly Father affords him a constant theme for pure and holy reflection, which is not appreciated by thousands who have greater opportunities than he has of observing nature in all the lovely changes which distinguish the revolving year.

Copthall is a lowly collection of buildings. No one must think of a hall of splendid dimensions and architectural adornments. That sort of hall, if ever there were such an one on the site spoken of, is entombed in forgetfulness, or has been removed—let others say where—before the memory of man. The peasant's family now occupies the humble dwelling, while the farm and farm-buildings are held of Lord Braybrooke, by that benevolent and worthy member of the Town-Council, Mr. Nathaniel Catlin.

The road rises, and on the right is the hanging wood, to the north of Pouns Hall. The part we see clothes the sides of a hill. Some persons might suppose that this was once a site for exhibiting public malefactors : not so ; for, although the corporate body, doubtless, had in former days the unenviable privilege of seeing execution done upon egregious malefactors, this was not the place where—as the Corporation records mention several payments for the requisite machine—that machine was publicly erected.

There is not much variety, neither is there considerable traffic, upon the road beyond ; but it is a pleasant agreeable walk for a contemplative man. In our younger days, it possessed extraordinary charms. On the way to Rickett's, in the time of the fathers—peace to their memories!—we had many a sweet holiday at that pleasant homestead. Fifty years have gone by, and yet it is all as fresh in the memory as the joy of yesterday ; and the fellow-schoolboy

of that period is traced through manhood to his grave, with an affectionate recollection that seems to imprint our own footsteps more and more upon the path which is unerringly conducting us to the same sure and certain abode.

As we ascend the hill by the chalk-pit, marked by some sage and solemn firs (we much prefer the sweet and elegant larch at this verdant season, and, indeed, throughout the year), we call to mind a few events, which are among the household tales of the locality; yet we will mention but one—the accidental death of an only son, who in the care of his young sisters was so injured as to be carried home to breathe his last. The sorrows of parents thus affectingly bereaved of a beloved youth are sacred to every heart: and sympathy must arise in every feeling and benevolent mind in reviewing such an instance of early and unexpected bereavement.

Beyond a plantation or two, we see the Redgate farm and Robin's grove. Pleasant recollections accompany the former, but who named the grove, our knowledge serves not. The friendly robin—robin redbreast—is here, for he appears to like our locality: but some swain, more remarkable than his neighbours, may have given the cognomen to the grove for aught we know: it is, however, a pretty name for a rural resort.

An arm in the road carries us by the pastures where St. Aylott's is situated. It is an imposing structure for a farmhouse, built in the 15th century, and on a part of the property which once appertained to the dissolved monastery of Walden. It is large and roomy, and was formerly surrounded by a moat, most of which still remains, to remind us of periods in our national history less secure than our own, and of castellated abodes, and constant preparations for concealed or unexpected foes. When Thomas, 4th Duke of Norfolk, was about to suffer death in 1572, he told his son, who was then to inherit his property, that he

hoped he would grant a lease of it to Bowles, "a true and honest servant" as the father ever had. This was a commendable legacy from a grateful master. Lord Howard—the last of this name at Audley End—subsequently had a faithful tenant here, Mr. Thomas Headland, for fifty years—a period creditable alike to both parties; and when Mr. Headland was desirous of giving up the farm, through age and infirmities, his lordship is said to have insisted on his retaining it, that their sands might run out together. But this was not the case; and Mr. Headland retired to Walden town, where he died at an advanced age, in a house on the west side of the Common.

At the back of St. Aylott's is Great Hales wood, well-known to sporting characters in this vicinity. The rousing horn has awakened attention, year by year, at this extensive covert; while a numerous field, of every grade, allured by its music, have forsaken their occupations to mingle in the fray.

On the left is Bright's farm, rather in the hollow, in the midst of its fields and plantations; a pleasant spot to nestle in, where the birds sing sweetly and uninterruptedly. Bright's wood, as laid down in the map, is now despoiled of its fair proportions. In days gone by, many a noble pheasant disported among its shades.

Northward, in the same parish,—that of Ashdon,—is Rickett's, the farm so well remembered. The homestead is on a hill; it is therefore observable for a considerable distance. The fathers are indeed no more, with whom, in our boyish days, we had a welcome round their hospitable hearth. The venerable head—the sturdy yeoman—the gay and happy maiden—are characters of other times. A new generation has risen up; and the grandson has lately committed to their quiet resting-place, in the church-yard, the wife of his youth, and the infant offspring of their loves.

Thus it is in life's probationary scene ; and in the fairest situations, after a few years—what is fleetier than Time !—all more or less have such monitory lessons brought to their attention, with an authority few minds would presume to resist.

Near by is the Rectory, the favourite abode of the Master of Caius College, Cambridge, the worthy and estimable Dr. Benedick Chapman. But having trespassed out of the road, we will now return to it by the narrow way that leads down the Rectory hill into the village. The Church, however, is left behind in the windings of the way hither. Mc Adam has not yet been called upon to curtail distances, by carving new ways across the fields, to correct the circumlocutions of our forefathers ; or they are held sacred to commemorate the valorous feats of old, when the Dane and the Saxon struggled for the soil. Eight hundred years have gone by since Canute and Ironside contended for the day, and when many English nobles fell for their beloved country, in the fierce and heated battle that is said to have come to its terrible close in this quiet village.

There is but little now to awaken peculiar attention in Ashdon. It has its hills and dells—its water-courses and umbrageous retreats ; and there are farms and places which were to us very pleasant spots in early life. Among these is Walton's, on the eastern side of the road to Bartlow, long occupied by Mr. Wright, the London banker, whose painful reverses, whatever his denomination, we most truly regret. How different the quiet he here enjoyed to the tumultuous scenes of city life ! Well may the man of business seek refreshment from its turmoils in "the calm retreat and silent shade, where nature loves to dwell."

A mile further, and we will glance at the Bartlow Hills, and close our sketch. They are celebrated ; for, from the road-side, they are striking hills, or tumuli, surmounted



each by a tree or two. The plough has searched every one to its very base, sparing not an inch ; and sage antiquaries, more remorseless than the farmer, have dug deep into their most sacred recesses. Whether Roman or Danish stayed not the despoiler's hand, but rather urged it on : so that whether it be the admirable Thebes,—the Necropolis of Memphis,—or the Bartlow Hills,—all alike are subject to the prying inquisitiveness of modern days, while their origin is sufficiently indistinct to leave their precise construction among the inexplicable secrets for ever enveloped in the night of time.

We might continue our route to Haverhill, or return by Linton : but we will prefer crossing the fields to Thicker and the Brick-kiln. At times we trace the gentle stream, where, under the hollow bank, an occasional trout has rewarded the judicious fisherman. Leaving Rickett's on the left, we pass near to Ashdon-street Farm, and by Puddewort, where the Bowtells lived, a name long known in this locality. Each has its associations—next-of-kin remembrances ; and while some are tomb-stones to the past, others are living, healthful shoots, growing up into full luxuriance, such as the mind likes to cherish, or to fashion into future pleasures, if life be spared. Ah ! thus it is—we go on weaving and weaving, till our heavenly Father gives the word, and the shuttle stops, and both writer and reader go to their long home. Happy they who see by faith a bright futurity !—this throws a lovely character around every view, whether in town or country ; and while we err not in indulging every consistent enjoyment, we have an unfailing interest in those natural beauties by which we are surrounded, and inherit with them a charm which nothing can destroy.



## No. 5.—NEWPORT.

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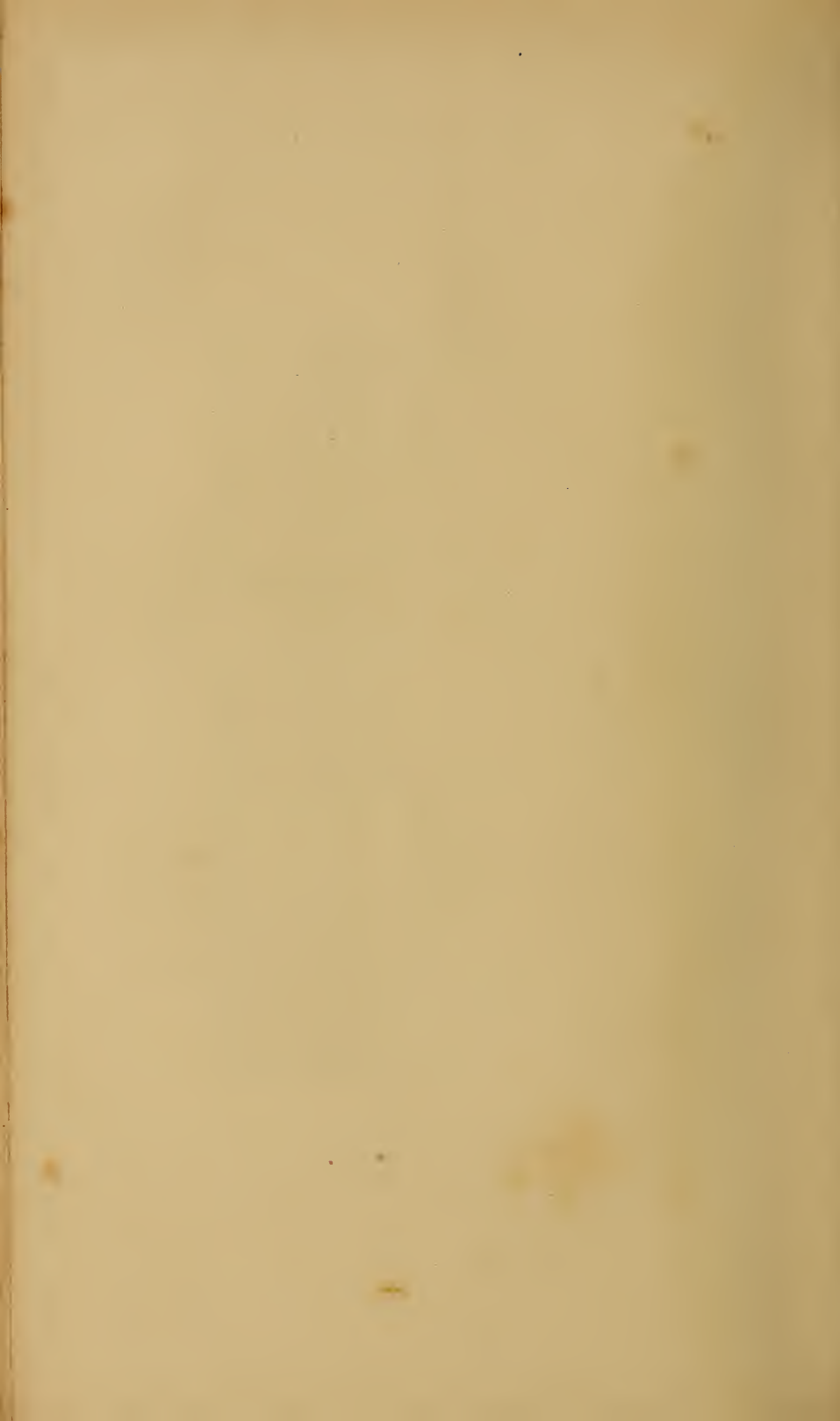
LET us vary our track, and on this occasion move westward; but instead of entering immediately upon the hard and public road, we will take a sweeter, yet as public a way, through Audley End Park. When we were here last, in order to pen our earliest sketch, the season was not so far advanced, but the oaks and the ash too have now become leaved, so that the landscape is every way attractive, while the grass is ready for the mower's arm. There, beyond the iron fencing, is seen the Temple of Concord, erected 1792, by the late Lord Howard de Walden; and near to it, though not in view from the public path, is the urn beneath the sombrous yew, on the pedestal of which is the affecting inscription, in which Lady Howard spoke her widowed heart ere she left Audley End for the last time. These are memorials which shew the graces of the female mind, as written with a deeply and unerring graving-tool, securing for amiable cultivated woman, a place,—a rank in human affections of the highest and most enviable renown.

The icehouse is to the right, hidden by the plantation, which extends to the wall on the left side of the gateway, where we enter upon the Audley End road. We recollect the outlet, some distance below, with its gate suspended



NEWPORT CHURCH.

PALMER'S PATENT GLYTHOGRAPHY



from the arch above, by no means so accommodating, either to ladies or other pedestrians, as the well-constructed iron gate by the icehouse lodge. This lodge was built by the present noble owner of Audley End, who has shown his taste in several constructions of this class at various points; but there is not one, we think, more pleasantly situated than this.

The hamlet of Audley End is now but a single street, having a school-house at the north corner, and the farm and alms-house at the other extremity, beyond the water-course.

On the right of the road is the principal entrance to the mansion, with the date 1616 (this gateway was restored in 1786), and a regal lion on the summit—the crest of the Howards. A few remarks may here, we think, be properly introduced with reference to this noble house. William the Conqueror granted the property to one of the bravest of his followers, Geoffrey de Mandeville; and in 1136, the latter founded a priory here for Benedictine monks. In 1190 it was converted into an abbey, but of the abbey all traces appear to have been long obliterated. Henry VIII. rewarded those who served his purposes, as William had done before him; and in 1538, Sir Thomas Audley, who was then created Lord Audley of Walden, in addition to other portions which belonged to religious houses in Essex, received the rich Abbey of Walden, with “all the estates, manors, and advowsons thereunto attached.” Lord Audley is said to have converted the abbey into his country residence; but Lord Braybrooke states that he has met no confirmation of this fact. In the King’s grant, dated the 12th of January, the 31st year of his reign, of manors, mill, &c., bestowed upon him for ever, by the service of half a knight’s fee only, reference is made to the “scyte of the manor of

Walden, in the county of Essex, with the Great Halle," &c. &c. (Grafton mentions, by the bye, that in 1524, King Henry was like to have been drowned by leaping over a ditch in following his hawk : had he indeed ended his life then, and thus ingloriously, what an influence it might have had over subsequent events !) To shew that Lord Audley desired to build up, we may here refer to his obtaining a grant in 1542 of the college in Cambridge, now named St. Mary Magdalen College, which he endowed, and the mastership of which is in the gift of the possessor of Audley End. Grafton says—"The Lord Audley, after the monkes were chased, erected Magdalen Colledge, in Cambridge; this house of monkes before time was called Buckingham Colledge." A descriptive account of Cambridge states that the college now occupies a portion of the site of an ancient priory, which was purchased by the associated monks of Ely, Ramsay, and Walden,—that in the reign of Henry VIII. they disposed of their possessions to Edward Strafford, Duke of Buckingham, who erected part of the present fabric, and intended to have endowed it, but that being soon afterwards, through the artifices of Wolsey, condemned to the scaffold, his design was frustrated, and his possessions reverted to the Crown. But to return to Audley End. Lord Audley's widow "was entitled to have and to enjoy his chief and capital mansion at Walden, with the park adjoining," &c. : he died 1544, "upon May even;" and in 1557 his daughter Margaret married, secondly (her first husband was Henry, fourth son of John Dudley, Earl of Northumberland), Thomas Howard, fourth Duke of Norfolk, and eldest son of the celebrated Henry, Earl of Surrey, executed the 2nd of June, 1572, which Earl of Surrey was beheaded at the same place twenty-five years before, nine days after which event King Henry himself died. It was the Duke's son,



Lord Thomas Howard, who reared the splendid mansion of Audley End, at a cost of £190,000, a large sum indeed in those days (1603-16). He was created Baron Howard of Walden, and afterwards, by James I. Earl of Suffolk. He held the office of Lord High Treasurer of England; and, as Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, in 1614-15, when the King was there, he kept a magnificent table at St. John's College, which occasioned an expenditure of £1,000 a day. His death occurred at Charing Cross, May 28th, 1626; but he was buried at Walden. The mansion and property have undergone many changes since then; but to Sir John Griffin, Lord Howard de Walden, and the present noble owner, we may attribute the state in which "Audley End" now appears among the ornamental features of this important county.

Lord Howard—we well remember his funeral—died May 25th, 1797, and was buried at Walden. To a boy of that period, the day was a red-letter day—it was a holiday—a gay-day; all the world seemed to be there: the hearse dressed out with escutcheons—the tenantry prancing about, albeit unused to such splendid ceremonies—and a long, very long procession, was all highly calculated to impress the minds of those who stood like us to gaze. But his lordship was no common man; and we are now oftentimes reminded that he thought of the poor by the means he adopted to clothe so many from year to year. Many an aged man and woman have been, and are still, warmed by his bounty, though he has now been dead near fifty years.

But we will look at the bridge he built over the Cam for the use of the public, and then take our leave, for this time, of Audley End. It is of three arches, and has a pleasing effect, see it from whatever point you may. A part of it was beaten down in 1813 by a team belonging to the late Mr. Davis, of Radwinter, when three horses were thrown



into the river, but were rescued without sustaining any injury. On the north side of the lawn, which expands down to the Cam, is the site of Lord Howard's Elysium Garden. It was rather confined, and surrounded with tall trees, and doubtless was not well suited for the general cultivation of flowers; but it was a sweet place, with a soft sod, and a musical waterfall, and seemed to our sombre fancy a charming retreat with a book or a friend.

The stables to the left of this garden—with 170 feet of frontage, as Mr. Robins might say—have lately been completely renovated by the noble owner. They look like an old friend with a very clean face. It is mentioned by Lord Braybrooke that they existed with the monastery, and are supposed to have been the hostel for lodging strangers.

In front of the house, westward, across the London road, is the Circular-temple, also built by Lord Howard, on the site of the old Hunting-tower, on Ring-hill, "a great Roman encampment," according to Stukely. It is a place for stirring associations: we know not how many might be awakened could we dream over the past; but in its present occupancy, with its adjoining aviary, rich in various birds, it is a pleasant subject for a visit, and affords also a highly interesting prospect.

From this object we turn southward. On the right we shortly pass the road to Littlebury Green, by the Warren-ring, and see the brick-field and extensive plantations; while on the left side, the park bounds extend a greater distance, till terminated by the capacious lodge, built several rods within the gate, as designed by Rickman. It is a mansion of a lodge, compared with the dog-kennel appurtenances we have seen, as blots or patches, on some domains.

Further on is Wenden Ambo: a rising road to it prevents the principal portion of this goodly village from being viewed by the traveller, unless he turn out of his way to partake

of its hospitality. Down the fields, on the eastern side, is the water-mill—Salmon's Mill—and so it has been for many years. Young salmon there are now, but not in the stream; yet we know, from agreeable experience, that eels are there also; and we heartily desire that the salmon may thrive, however long and however cloudy the orations may be in elucidation of corn-laws, and the mystifying influence of popular suggestions and suppositions.

Passing Mr. Scott's agreeable abode—Myrtle-hill, we presume—we descend towards "Cocks in the Hole." Myrtle-hill is much altered since Mr. Ivory presided over it, in Lord Howard's time. Its present presiding genius is a lover of horticulture, a gentleman of judgment as well as taste, as his neighbours have ample cause to attest from the fine productions of his grapery.

Crossing the stream, at Sparrow End—the gentle stream that assists in feeding the wheels of the mill—we see corn-fields on the right, and Wenden wind-mill elevated considerably above its meek associate in the meadows. On the left we pass the hilly road to Walden, which bounds to the north the domain of Shortgrove. This belonged to the late Joseph Smith, Esq., an able man, and long associated with Mr. Pitt, Prime Minister of England, in very critical times. His eldest son, William Charles Smith, Esq., now inherits the property, and long may he enjoy it. The house is commodious, contains some very valuable paintings (several of which have very kindly been lent for exhibition at the Walden Museum), has behind it extensive gardens and suitable buildings, while in front an expansive lawn stretches down to the river Cam, where also, as viewed from the road, cedars and other ornamental trees give an interest to a place which cannot but be admired.

Those who have seen Shortgrove—whether Newmarket travellers or other wayfaring people—must also, we think,

have noticed a very large stone that is on the foot-path, as we enter Newport by Mr. Gayford's farm. It is much too large for a mile-stone, and never was hewn out, it would seem, of any quarry, except that of nature's own, because it has no decided form that art might have given it. The bespattering effects of time may have smoothed its sharp angles and discrepancies, if such it ever had; but who placed it there, or why, we will not determine; yet fabulous chronology determines that, in olden days, it would have served for a seat, a luxurious seat, to the way-worn and weary; whereas it is now so elevated, as to be rather monumental of the past, than of any seeming use to the generations to come. Yet there it will abide, we doubt not, unless railway acts—very sweeping acts, indeed—(projectors of railroads, with the whole corps of engineers to boot, have not a scintillation of mercy in their componency for ancient land marks or border beauties) bear it away to that land of forgetfulness where difficulties and obstructions are alike unknown.

Next we pass the "Coach-and-Horses"—a well-known house of call—in years of old; but its days for coachmen are now decidedly numbered—its sign may still be as it is, unless prudence should alter it to the Fiery Dragon, or the Vulcan Steamer, in compliment to the expected railway; but the dashing team, and the smart-built mail of Palmer origin—the palmy days of road renown—will soon be over. But thus it is—the host and guest alike are brought to feel that travelling is by no means "as it were," and contemplation—the deepest and most profound, cannot insinuate what great England, the land we dearly love, will come to next.

Newport, the extent of our ramble on this occasion, furnishes no peculiar attraction at present; at any rate, not to travellers like ourselves. We say *at present*, since for-

merly it was a market town; but Geoffrey de Mandeville, first Earl of Essex, obtained license to remove the market to Walden. Lord Braybrooke, in his history, records that in 1392, the time of Richard II., the King's Commissioner sat in Walden, to enquire after rents and other regal dues, and found—That every brewer should pay for every quarter of malt brewed to sell, one farthing; that every man should pay the like for every quarter of malt bought or sold; that every man who kept market, or opened a shop window, should also pay a farthing; and that all brewers and bakers must have their corn ground at the King's Mill, or submit to other impositions. This induced chapmen to forsake the town, "And then began the market at Newport, to the detriment of Walden." The market, however, no longer exists at Newport; but whether the place shall revive, and rise like a phoenix from the ashes of past times, or ashes to come, time alone must develope.

We will now return by Sparrow End, where we cross the sturdy but humble bridge which spans the progressing Cam, in its course by the mill, and pass along by the wall newly-made by Mr. Smith, to bound this side of his park. It is in Newport parish, till we reach nearly the summit of rather a long hill for unpretending Essex. We have been in Devon and Wales, and met in both counties with hills much more awful, as the vallies are unquestionably more profound; but, reaching the top, we perceive that the men of Walden have been cutting improvements and breaking down difficulties, where, in more tumultuous times, their fathers liked to make them. We are now on Gallow-hill; it was, therefore, an eminent place in former reigns; (Gallow-field, by the bye, is mentioned in a feoffment of the 29th of Henry VI.) and in the Corporation Records are the following entries:—

1597. The carpenter for setting up the gallows, 3s.

To Groutt, of Wimbish, for tymber for the gallows, 3s. 8d.

Payed to Stanmer for two halters, 4d.

1631. Paid for timber and making the gallows, 4s. 4d.

The town-records shew also that Walden was, at one time or other, duly provided with all that was needful for offenders against good order and the laws; for in 1551 (Edward VI.) the pillory cost 3s. 4d.; and in 1552 (the *merciful* days of his sister Mary) 6s. 8d. was paid for “making the cucking stoole;” as in 1613 (James I.) the large sum of £1. 9s. 3d. was “paide for setting up the cooking stole”—woeful hour to some poor scold! But here we must aver that we live in happier times—there is a manifest change—the days of roasting and boiling human beings (look at Henry VIII’s reign for many instances) are happily gone by; and although bigotry may deal out its illiberal attacks on the helpless and the solitary in confined situations, nothing on a large scale can safely be attempted: while also the current of public opinion flows decidedly against such capital punishments, as interfere with the ethereal and immortal spirit, which feeble man cannot give, and which nothing short of dire necessity should induce man to take means to separate from his unworthy fellows.

Re-entering the town in this direction, not one in a hundred thinks of the way by which he came. The celebrity of other times that occasioned its appellative, is now merely a matter of history: and grateful indeed ought we to be to that sustaining and overlooking Providence, through which we enjoy the sterling benefits of public and social order in a high degree.

*June, 1843.*



## No. 6.—T H A X T E D .

WE purpose going southward on this occasion, but we must cross the Common to do so. In our progress to the south-east corner, we pass the maze which was lately recut, and the embankment around it repaired; but, being open to the public, it is much frequented by the young, so that the lines and circles are not so well preserved as might be wished.

Crossing Foul-slough bridge—what a memento this is of a slough of other days!—we leave the Sewer's End road on our left,—and then the instructive finger-post, where we enter upon the way to Thaxted. The Gas-works are here situated,—certainly at a considerable distance from the principal streets of the town; but it was the most eligible and desirable site that could be obtained when the Gas Company commenced their operations; and we are now brought to admit that gas, like steam, will find its way in every direction.

This addition to the local scenery was, it is certain, not included in the vocabulary of the learned and able Sir Thomas Smyth, who spoke of Walden as “a town surrounded by fields smiling with pleasant saffron.” The writer of “Excursions through Essex” speaks of it as “a valley, beautifully embosomed with hills.” The hills are still smiling, but not with saffron; and the valley is



beautiful—from cultivation; while the towering chimney by the gasometer, though it sometimes ejects an unprofitable volume, shews too that the town is benefited by the light of the age, and is illuminated in the season most requiring it, with a brilliance as pleasant as that of saffron.

Further on, upon the eastern side of the road, is the lime-kiln. In our boyhood, it was fairly entitled to this distinguishing appellation; and of that, and that only, did we hear that some wayfaring men had ventured to it for warmth, and become painful spectacles of lost and wretched humanity. Now, however from extending business, and more active competition, there are several kilns, sufficient to meet any probable demand for lime, where there is so abundant a supply of the staple chalk.

Passing the range of neat white cottages, built by Mr. William Ward, we soon come to the road leading up to Sheer-hill. It is the direction for a pleasant retired walk, and whence we can enjoy some interesting views, while the town is seen also in a very favourable position. The road needs to be widened by act of parliament to be a sociable road; at present it just serves for a cart or a friend.

A quarter of a mile further on, we come to the lane leading, westward, to the mills, a fair road in fair weather, but one always interesting to us from the allotments for cottagers in the fields on either hand. A part of Railey-field was very early devoted by Messrs. Gibson to this laudable object. The land is excellent, as well as that on the opposite side of the lane, which, belonging to one of the public charities, is well appropriated, in a double sense, to the benefit of the poor.

Half a mile further we reach a well-known nooking in the Thaxted road. Ask where you are, and you will be told it is "Ben Hull's Grave." Here was the burial place

of the unhappy suicide: here was the scene of a night-drama, painful everyway in retrospection: here was the unceremonious entombment, attended by the appalling stake, driven through the wretched remains of one so lately the tenement of an immortal—a never-dying spirit. The mind revolts at the needless desecration of the chalice which so recently contained such an ethereal essence: and we may now rejoice at the progress of intelligence which places at a discount all needless harrowing of the feelings of the living, in order to punish, as it were, the unfeeling dead. The same progress of intelligence, in combination with truth, happily conveys to mankind in general that there is more real heroism in bearing the ills we have, than flying unbidden into the presence of Him who scans every motive, and knows the honest groundwork of every resolution. The poor maniac is to be pitied, while the cold-blooded suicide accumulates upon his head the consequences of aggravated guilt.

On the opposite side of the road is the homestead on Lord Braybrooke's estate, held by an active sensible man, Mr. Matthew Winder. We were there, a few years since, with many of our town's-people, when an accidental fire occasioned the destruction of the out-buildings. Melancholy as the raging element appears in its devastating effects, it is a consolation to human nature to see the brotherly feeling displayed in this neighbourhood when such a calamity occurs. Oh! it blots out many trifles whenever the tocsin of alarm, the hasty bell, calls forth the energies of willing labourers in assisting the distressed, at a time when help is so greatly needed.

Still ascending—for we must of necessity get out of the valley before we can extend our ramble—we pass Gunter's farm, on the right; and further on Thunderly

Hall, pleasantly situated at a distance from the road, and occupied by Mr. Winder before-mentioned. We are now in the parish of Wimbish; but till the 15th century Thundersly was a distinct parish. On the right also is Peverell's—Peverell's wood. The lover of the chace merely says Peverell's, or Rowney. Rowney wood is further on. Many stirring circumstances are, doubtless, associated with both these properties; but, like the unwritten law, they are not in print. William Peverell, who possessed the Debden Hall estate in the 12th century, is stated to have been obliged to fly the realm, about 1153, in consequence of his being charged with poisoning Ranulph, Earl of Chester: two years after this, his estates were seized by Henry II.

At Pinkney's we come to the cross-road from Newport to Wimbish Green, a pleasant drive; and one mile further we see the Elms, held by Mr. Robert Franklin, a farm forming part of the estates which support that noble institution in Saffron Walden for aged householders, King Edward's Almshouse—Edward VI.—restored and improved in the reign of that youthful monarch, through the instrumentality of Sir Thomas Smyth. It is pleasant to associate with the scenery around, the characters which adorned society in centuries gone by, and who will be gratefully remembered while such institutions continue to endure.

Two miles beyond, we reach Thaxted, the terminus of our sketch. A native would refer to Pipples and Broad-oaks—Higham's and Goddard's—but further than this, this deponent saith not—there may be found at one or more a welcome worthy of a yeoman's board. We may remark of Broadoaks, that Aurelius Piercy Wiseman, the last of the name of that place, and head and chief of that right worshipful family (so says an inscription in Wimbish Church), was killed in a duel *in the flower of his age*, 1680.

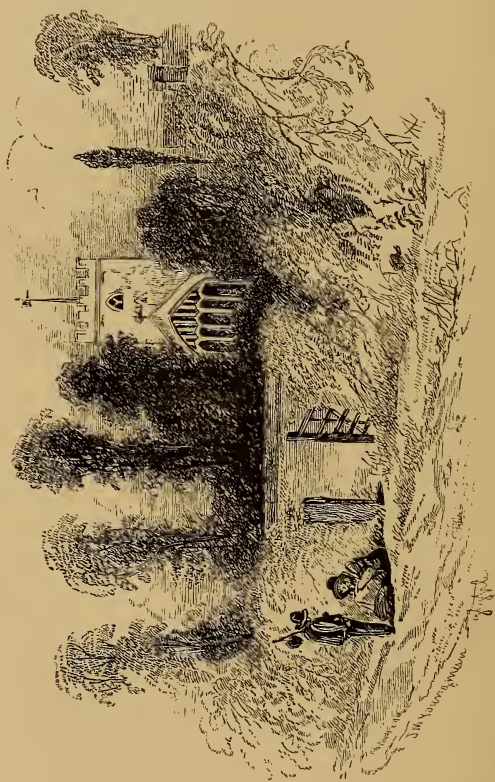
Thaxted is seated on the river Chelmer, near its source ; the stream, therefore, waters no trifling portion of goodly Essex. The Church, "long and beautiful," is a commanding structure, as we enter the place in this direction. It seems to us to be too closely surrounded, like very many of our ecclesiastical buildings, to be seen, as it deserves to be, with adequate admiration. Erected at the cost of several noble persons in the 14th century, a king—Edward IV.—is said to have completed the chancel. Thaxted was, therefore, a favoured spot in former days ; and history, likewise, sets forth, that in those of Philip and Mary, it was incorporated, under the names of the Mayor, Bailiffs, and commonality. Its corporate honours were confirmed by Queen Elizabeth, and an addition thereto was made by James I. ; but for sufficient reasons, doubtless, the Charter, it is said, was allowed to die a natural death in the time of the second James. His brief period of sovereign rule was also distinguished by a mandamus requiring the corporation of Saffron Walden to choose Richard Reynolds for Mayor, who has left on record the following entry :—"January 23, 1687-8. Spent at the Rose & Crown, when the King's messenger came down with the mandamus, and I was chosen Mayor, 01. 00. 00." King James was therefore a troubler of corporations as well as the church ; yet corporate bodies, in all their occasional difficulties, appear but seldom to have neglected those necessary refectations so essential to our common nature, whether we be decked or not in the honours of the age. Every rightly constituted mind—all judicious students in history—will appreciate the value of character among cotemporaries, and the maintenance of social order : no one who is not mischievous would set one portion of society against another—exalting the poor at the expense of the more elevated, or humbling the poor to please the mighty.

We therefore commend what we may deem a commendable support of honourable degrees in the public system, considering them the fair reward of public merit ; but we laud still more those elevating distinctions which are assured to the good man who aims at the unfading honours of eternal life. We trust and believe that the once corporate town of Thaxted is not deficient in such characters, and we truly wish them the incorporeal rewards of a world to come. But here we must leave them, considering that while some are anxious about the races of a day, there is a race in which the successful competitor, who endures to the end, receives a crown which shall never fade, and shall enjoy a home eternal as the skies.

*July, 1843.*







LITTLEBURY CHURCH.

PAINTER'S PATENT GLYTHOGRAPHY.

## No. 7—LITTLEBURY.

A WALK to Littlebury is, from its moderate distance and other circumstances, a very agreeable one. The valetudinarian in his progressions after health may attempt this by degrees: he may ascend the hill—Windmill-hill,—by which we are conducted to it, as the state of his chest, and his general case may warrant; and if he once reach the summit, we flatter ourselves he will soon thereafter be able to master the other little eminences which occur on the road to this interesting village.

We leave the town by Bridge-end. This implies a hollow—that where the watercourse denominated the Slade—Madgate Slade—passes from the grounds of Mr. Francis Gibson, in its way through Audley End Park. It is much improved since 1795, when we recollect the town was here inundated; part of the Park wall was then broken away, and the residents thereabouts were greatly disturbed by the unexpected and unwelcome flood. It was a busy time for an inland place, where boats and rafts are but little understood. The slade is now covered over in the vicinity of the road, which has effected a great improvement in this locality, so well remembered from our earliest years.

On the west-side we pass one of Lord Braybrooke's new Lodges, at the corner of the Deer Park; and on the east, the allotments in Turner's Charity Fields. The town is

surrounded indeed with smiling features—there is no waste to be entered upon from any quarter: for none can say the Common is waste ground, when they look at Mr. Webb's flock browsing upon it in the day-time, or, while in the evening hour, as well as at other seasons, some ten or twelve parties are distributed over it, at their respective games, principally cricket—as if it were peopled with bipeds of every age. The married and the single are there,—till the dusk of eve, when they pass off in crowds, and the Common is depopulated as if by magic.

But approaching the hill, we first perceive that the ascent is very gradual. It was not always so. It was not thus when the Corporation mill stood upon it, as doubtless it did. By the bye, that mill was leased by the Corporation, in the reign of the second James, for £4. 13s. 4d. But the mill is no more, nor the awkward road which went up to it. Those were bad days for loaded teams; and we remember it was a matter of awe as they descended almost unrestrainable, till they reached the town. Now, thanks to the men of the present generation, and some who are gone to their rest, the road is a Newmarket-road, and the hill, though a high one for a locality like this, is as easily ascendable as the most fastidious could desire.

The Park wall commences at Bridge End, and is continued to the turn of the road beyond Windmill-hill, and then on to North End. Straightforward is the way to Stump-cross, and Cambridgeshire; and down in the low grounds on the left, where the Cam wends its way among the fields, is a part long frequented as a bathing place. A few years since, a young man, deaf and dumb, and well known for his peculiarities, came there to a premature end. Doubtless he struggled; but his inarticulate cries must have died away unheeded upon the floating breeze.

North End is but a cluster of cottages : and hard by, on the south-side of the road, is the kennel, belonging to Audley End mansion. Though not an imposing structure, the history of many a good dog may have been written within its walls, while the sturdy gamekeeper has here had his domicile, whose name and renown were long associated with the rural hamlet of North End.

A short distance further, and we approach the fair and goodly stream, which, on the left, coquettes with the wheel of the mill, now occupied by Mr. Bewsher, and on the right winds along, with meandering fickleness, till it waters rec-tories and universities : oftentimes it sports itself among fertile meadows—then amuses itself at a mill-dam—and anon, rushes along till in playfulness it unites itself with that Ouse—one among several of the like name—which flows by the venerable and productive city of Ely. Mr. Bewsher is well-known in a wide district, for his services as secretary of the Saffron Walden Agricultural Society ; and we sincerely wish that he may long enjoy his well-acquired celebrity in district and other meetings in connexion with that useful and benevolent institution.

But the stream here is peculiar ; it is markedly the same as in our boyhood. There is the footbridge, with board after board to pass over it, and there are the identical small fry—they must surely be the same that were frisking about, say fifty years ago—when, with the small vision of childhood, we calculated upon the best means of bottling some for home consumption. The quiet waters—for neither animal nor wain is now passing through it—have the same placid lineaments which we so much admired in early life, when we looked through the rail (not over it) in order to consider the transparent element which flowed below, exhibiting the fractured crockery, the stickleback, and the



loitering flag, as clear and legible as light could make them.

How different the mighty surges where the Eddystone is! The builder of the first lighthouse on that insulated rock—Mr. Henry Winstanley—lived at Littlebury. This beacon was constructed by him of wood in 1696; and although it had resisted many violent storms, yet in 1703, it was blown down, and Mr. Winstanley, who was then repairing it, and all his attendants perished with it. Mrs. Winstanley was at Littlebury, it is said, at the time; and while the storm raged—for it agitated this part of Essex—her hopes of her husband's safety rested materially on a model of the lighthouse, which he had put up in his garden. From his known opinion of its stability she had unshaken confidence, while this model remained in its position: at length, however, to her dismay, it quailed before the storm, fell, and never again did she see its sanguine inventor, but the news shortly came that proclaimed her a widow, by the awful termination of such commendable ingenuity and perseverance to aid the tempest-tost sailor. Mr. Winstanley was famous for his waterworks, full of whimsical contrivances. He published, as stated by Lord Braybrooke in his *History of Audley End*, a list of the plans, elevations, and prospects of that noble structure, and dedicated it to King James II., describing himself as "Clarke of the works of the said Pallace, and that at Newmarket." A Mr. Henry Winstanley appears to have been one of the establishment at Audley End in 1665; and a Robert Winstanley is said to have written a poetical account of a part of Essex, entitled "*Poor Robin's Perambulation from Saffron Walden to London*," performed in July, 1687, and published the same year. These parties were probably related to the builder of the Lighthouse. By the bye, we have lately discovered that Littlebury Green, part of this parish, has had a poet. In 1753,

James Webb, of that hamlet, published "Poems on several occasions." His themes were of a religious order; but we have not heard that they awakened much regard.

Leaving the village, we proceed along the Cambridge road, and pass one of Lord Braybrooke's farms, where lived the father of Mr. John Clayden, the present occupant—as comely and as generous a British yeoman as is seen in many a day. We next come to Bourdeux or Bourdeaux—named, perhaps, as streets and mansions are now called after some distinguished man or scene of recent times—from that city of France where the heroic Black Prince of England held his court after the battle of Poitiers. Few that indulge in a glass of claret, over one of which this manor and property may have been named, but know that the vicinage of Bourdeaux produces the finest wines of this description. The country hereabouts is not a wine-growing district, but it is exceedingly pleasant, and having asserted so much we may perhaps be excused a further reference to continental Bourdeaux, which at the season of the vintage forms one of the most delicious landscapes in the world. The time of Edward III. was a stirring æra; and any Englishman living at Bourdeaux may feel a natural affinity and a proud interest in the Prince, whose exalted character and uninterrupted series of good fortune, and whose victories, modesty, affability, and munificence, drew strangers to his then city from every part of Europe.

Little Chesterford now scarcely invites any one down its single street; but its manor formerly belonged to Queen Edeva, and its Church marks the resting-place of the lords of the village four centuries ago. The effigy of a Walsingham is there with accompaniments that cannot be mistaken. While the tombs of the great and mighty of former ages, as well as full-grown cities, have all been swept away, indi-

cating the fate of all similar constructions, it still seems natural to mankind to erect memorials to departed kin; but after a few short years, with some favourite exceptions, consecrated to a more enduring remembrance through talents rightly applied, or benevolence of a pure and holy character, the eye of the living roams over the burial-place of even recent generations with an inconceivable vacancy, yet with a right appreciation of the vanity of human life. This is the moral of the proudest history; and we think it is fully confirmed in this vicinity, as we proceed to the site of the old Roman station in the adjoining parish, Great Chesterford. It once covered a space of at least fifty acres—but the plough has gone over it, and only occasional memorials are found of the hardy and busy people who then were masters of the soil. They were no common persons in their time, as is proved by the various instruments and utensils left upon this site: but while history—and clear and indisputable records—tell us of their mighty and extended career, humbling indeed it seems to human ambition to know, since their decline, how much has been obliterated—their very dust dispersed to the winds of heaven,—and that busy conjecture cannot tell whether this was the Canvoritum or the Iciani of Imperial Rome.

Entering Chesterford village, (it is described as formerly a market-town, a great town and populous) we pass on the right the winding Cam, with the mill upon it belonging to Mr. Sampson. As the river has not changed, it doubtless worked the mill of ancient times, when Maud, Lady Marsh-aless of England, Countess of Norfolk and Warren, gave forty shillings yearly, issuing out of her mill at this place, to the nuns of St. George at Thetford, to buy them clothes, half-linen, half-woollen.

A short distance further, and close upon the old Roman

road, is the Crown Inn, belonging to Mr. Edwards, and now far better known for its excellent accommodations, than the savory cuisine of Roman life. The utility of these establishments in former days, to such as could appreciate the comforts they afforded, must have been very apparent: that they are still so, in an eminent degree, need not be asserted, and particularly when they are found at suitable distances on a road like that of Newmarket—the racing ground of some, who, imitating Heliogabalus of old, have not cared how much they expended upon a single supper. But railroads have altered the whole complexion of inns by the roadside—the most eminent are thrown out of date in certain situations; but the judicious and consistent management of the Crown, cannot fail to recommend it to those classes who are led in their migrations to seek the agreeable welcome which it is so calculated to give.

This village is pleasantly situated, and has an open prospect into Cambridgeshire. Being of the ancient demesne of the crown, it once enjoyed numerous important privileges, as may be seen in the Charter of King Charles I. dated 1634, preserved, we are told, in the Church chest. Neither Roman power nor royal charter, has, however, succeeded in maintaining in Chesterford parish, the greatness and the populousness of former times. The working bees of England congregate now where their hives are most productive, and they carry with them the renown and the consequence which of old were derived from arbitrary enactments and compulsory laws. Trade and commerce have grown out of size for any old garments to fit them, so that new vestments and better measures are continually needed to suit the gigantic proportions of cities and towns which are now, as it were, born in a day.

A little north of this part, rises the river Stour. We

like to think of rivers—constantly flowing rivers—fertilizing and accommodating rivers—rivers which have for ages bubbled up here and there, to give water to a multitude: and then we think of the beautiful allusion in the sacred volume to the pure River of Water of Life. Well may the weary pilgrim—the aged meditative pilgrim, weighed down with the years of several generations—sigh for that water, when these beauteous rivers of this fair earth impart such support and such benefits to those who luxuriate among the scenes which are freshened and blessed by their perennial and inexhaustible effusions. The Stour—the gentle Stour—has a course of fifty miles or more, to part the two friendly counties of Essex and Suffolk, and falls into the sea at Harwich. It is, therefore, a domestic friend, and may well claim a notice with the Granta and the Cam, that keep on their momentary course through our own loved locality.

Going through the village we enter the road from Stump Cross, and move southward towards home. It is a quiet, peaceable way back; and after passing the east-end of Little Chesterford, we come to Springwell, belonging to the Parish of Walden. The springs hereabouts are said to be so near the surface that the water may be obtained by a pole and a bowl—they are, in fact, spring-wells. We are not again interrupted in our musings till we reach the crown of Mill-hill; then we see the town in the valley—its Church—its Museum—and so many other objects, that even the constant resident naturally casts his eye over it—around—and beyond to its fruitful hills, with affectionate admiration.

The seasons impart their own peculiar interest to every ramble: the present may therefore be remarked with all its appropriateness, for we cannot but look with delight at the fields, now crowned with luxuriant corn. How rich the



vestment with which the earth is decked on every side ! And how happy the birds are where the gun is not seen, as they rise or fall, with fluttering wing, into nature's open granary ! The valley into which we are descending will soon echo with the voice of gladness and the song of praise ; for the busy reapers will be fully employed, and every class will have an interest in husbanding the grain. Oh ! it is a moving sight—a theme for heaven-born poesy, and a subject eminently worthy of an Artist's pencil. We have seen it thus devoted ; and we rejoice—as from the summit of Mill-hill we contemplate the well-occupied vale of Walden, and the lands above and beyond it—that we have a native artist to extend the knowledge of its beauties, and to increase the number of our own pleasant household friends by faithful and animated representations of the places familiar to us as our very meals, and among which, if it so please the great Disposer of all events, we hope to pass the remainder of our days.

*August, 1843.*

## No. 8.—HEMPSTED.

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WALDEN Common is admirably situated: its original appropriation to its present use was an act teeming with wisdom and kindness to future thousands and unborn generations; and while we can tread upon it as very lords of the soil, from the privilege we inherit, we feel deeply grateful to that good man or men who were the honoured means of leaving a plot of ground of such dimensions, and of such fair proportions, for the comfort, recreation, and health of a multitude to come. It was unquestionably an act of paternal beneficence, and we rejoice that, among other places, Derby has recently witnessed a similar noble appropriation; while the aged and the young may seek air and occupation upon an Englishman's freehold, and without, too, any charges or drawbacks consequent thereupon. Walden Common is, we think, well situated, because it is not a nooking in some particular road, but it is the way,—the royal highway,—to various places. Indeed there are from the four several corners, some six or seven roads, east, west, north, and south,—thus conveying to a stranger's mind that there must be a pleasant diversity, which way soever he may choose to proceed.

On this occasion, we go to the south-east; and at the bridge over the Slade, we pass Chater's floral and horticultural grounds—much improved, by the bye, and having

abundance of light thrown into his pleasurable pursuits by the demolition of that grove or plantation, originated by Mr. Robinson, sufficiently far back in our domestic history to allow of considerable altitude among the rival trees. But the whole have fallen under the axe; and their removal has given a new appearance to this locality. There is more breathing ground, and the flowers acknowledge it by their improved character and greater beauty.

Proceeding eastward, we pass one hobby after another. Most of us have a favorite hobby; but some spur them on with more spirit than their neighbours. It is instructive to look back and consider how others have digged and planted,—how they have builded and contrived to make a nest for years to come; and what an interest they themselves took in it, and how they strove to interest others in that which required daily action and nightly thought; but, lo! after a few zodiacal revolutions, or some unexpected developement of a new resource, the old hobby has been left for another to master, and the favourite staff has been transferred altogether to another hand.

A few fields further on and we come to the Union-house for this district. It is a spacious and airy building; and was placed upon a flat, that the several wings might stand upon a like level. We truly hope that it may never be tenanted as it might be; but from having a knowledge of some of the old Workhouses, and the lax and demoralizing system which prevailed in not a few, we are fain to believe, from the way in which a union of parishes for the general good may be carried on, that very many experience comforts within the house which they could not share so systematically and so well under other circumstances. It was an early precept for a Christian people—If any would not work, neither should he eat;—but here is provision for all

who absolutely need it; and no one who thinks correctly could advocate—while the aged, the invalid, and the helpless, have an imperative claim which no sophistry could weaken or annul—that the industrious bees in the public hive should provide for the drones a lazy or luxurious ease. It is an axiom that sin and suffering usually go together; but whatever may be the cause—whether demoral and unworthy habits, or sharp, biting, unavoidable want,—chilling misery unlooked for and thought to be unmerited,—still the houseless wanderer finds a hostel in the gloaming hour of eve—his bed, a meal, and shelter, where, in olden times, he might have perished, neglected and unpitied, because he was unknown. Christianity is the mother of institutions for suffering humanity, and where Christian-men are guardians of the poor, these unions must be beneficial, although incapable of meeting every ill to which our flesh is heir.

Pouns-wood is on the left, standing on high ground: its hue is changing now with the warmth of harvest hours. We here pass the fields belonging to the farm—Pouns-hall. Courts were held for the manor of Pounces, up to the time of Elizabeth, which belonged at an early period to the monastery; for Pouncyns was in the first of Henry IV. held of the Abbot of Walden, and was called so, Lord Braybrooke considers, after a family of that name mentioned in older writings. The house is a pleasant distance from the town—say a mile; is agreeably and prominently situated, and has much to recommend it, although not distinguished by any features connected with halls built in our modern days.

Behind this house, on the summit of the hill, up a wiry, narrow, and irregular ascent, not very likely to be improved, is another comfortable dwelling, with a garden in front,

and an accommodating pond by the roadside. It is probably the most striking of the few respectable homesteads at Sewer's End; and truly do we wish that it had continued in the same possession in which we knew it in our early life, when its owner had a ready welcome for a friend, and appreciated the pleasure of seeing others happy around him.

We have spoken of the hill, and we record no new complaint, although we credit the belief that the roads are better here than they were in the 15th century, since Geoffrey Symond, otherwise Heyreman, of Walden, bequeathed eleven acres of land "clepyd dreyes," "for amendinge of the foule hygh waies in Seward's End, Holy's Lane, and in the waye leding to Typtote Ward, whereas most need is, by the dwellers in Seward's End for ever, together with other good men," &c. Worthy Geoffrey, however much he and his ambling steed might have suffered about 1481, through the roughness of the ways in his time, were he to revisit Sewer's End in our days would probably not admit that the good men referred to had done all they could, in leaving this descent without all the improvement by which, in this improving age, the hill might be moderated for the benefit, more particularly, of timid equestrians and loaded wains.

Sewer's End is the well-known appellation in these days; in Geoffrey's we see it was Seward's, and if we go back to the times of Edward the Confessor, it was probably Siward, after a Saxon Thane, one of the most intrepid Generals of the age, who, being sent into Scotland, 1054, to assist Malcolm, joined his forces under the command of Macduff, and in a desperate battle totally defeated Macbeth, who was obliged to fly to the mountains for shelter. Siward soon after paid the debt of nature, and Tofti succeeded him as Earl of Northumberland. We mention the name of



Tofti, the brother of King Harold, because of its seeming reference to a manor hard by Sewer's End—that of Tiptofts, which local histories assert was the name of an ancient and honourable family, some of whom became barons of the realm, and earls of Worcester. Tofti, however—though the brother of a King—was not an honourable man; for he so greatly oppressed the Northumbrians that they expelled him the county. Lord Mordaunt, by will, dated 1571, left this manor to King's Hall and Brasenose College, Oxford. It is now the residence of Mrs. Gayton.

Curving it along the road we come to Kibberdey wood, said to have been a hanging wood, inasmuch as one of a desperate gang of rogues was here suspended in chains, according to the moving practice of a bygone period. Whatever influence this spectacle may have had upon the vicious, and whether it ever prevented the commission of a single crime, which we feel at a loss to aver, it had in one case a most moving effect. A worthy old farmer was of so sociable a turn on the market-day, that he was the subject of an occasional lecture from his better-half, for staying unreasonably late at night, participating in the gratifications of the table, instead of going home in good time, to look after his family and his stock. But a memorable change took place in him from the time of this unsightly suspension at Kibberdey wood; he not only deserted the market-table at a reasonable hour, and moderately charged, we presume, with the juice of the grape (farmers, some of them at least, drank wine then as well as now)—put spurs into his horse as soon as he neared the horrific wood, and galloped on with an impetus so remarkable that it is said he never stopped again till he reached his home. Well might the “gude wife” have exclaimed, with both amazement and delight, she truly wished Kibberdey wood had been a real hanging wood many years before.

Leaving Walden parish, we here enter upon Radwinter, where we are reminded by many things of old Mr. Carter, who increased his property most materially by his dealings in "heart of oak"—England's best bulwark,—when in the last long war timber was so much in demand for British shipping in every part of the world. We shortly come to his late residence on the right, now occupied by Mrs. Carter, the widow of the gentleman, to whom it descended; and truly it is a pleasant dwelling, pleasantly situated, looking into its garden, gay indeed in summer-time, and always interesting; and, mingled with its other varieties in earth, air, and water, having a giant acorn, emblematical of those dealings which enabled him to distribute a large property among an extensive family connexion, at the close of an active and prosperous life. On the left of the road is the Parsonage, a handsome modern building, which is truly well kept up by the highly-respectable Rector, the Rev. John Bullock,\* whose family is so identified with this county, that he needs not any remark of ours. The ancient Church, dedicated to the Virgin Mary (the simplest and truest dedication ever seems to be to the worship of God, and God alone), is half a mile further on, near to which is Radwinter Hall, the property of the Bullock family, a mansion of a homestead, and, placed at a distance from the road, with its pastures and buildings adjoining, is indeed a respectable abode for the tenant it may claim. The Rev. William Harrison, who was Rector of Radwinter from 1558, till his death in 1593, is known for his historical writings of Britain and Scotland.

Immediately beyond the Church, the road is crossed by another; but we continue our ramble eastward, and descend,

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\* This gentleman died on the 12th of August, 1844, and was succeeded by his son.

by a curve, into a valley, at the foot of which is one of the sources of Blackwater River—now but a little stream, but after heavy rains, deep and expansive, so that, for a time, carriages must go in a different direction. Instead of a bridge, there is a raised way for walkers and horsemen. We have, too, those monitory posts on each side, marked by rule, in order to apprise the traveller of the depth of the passing current. Another early rivulet of the same river we cross half a mile further on, by the Ash farm, but not being in so confined a situation, nor fed so liberally as the former, it does not aim to alarm the timid, but discharges its excess of water with a commendable rapidity that causes but little interruption.

Then commences the hill—say the rising ground—by which we approach Hempsted-hill farm, long occupied by Mrs. Horner, deceased. To the left runs the bye-way to Winchlow Hall (once a moated abode), and the residence of the Harvey family. There is a chase still, though in ruins, by which the renowned heads of the family, in olden days, drawn by the well-fed beasts of burden, were conveyed to the village Church: but the house is gone, scarcely leaving a wreck behind, while an occasional portion applied to uses, some of which need not be mentioned, may be found in the farm-dwellings on the estate, where they appear like relics of a greatness that is departed. We have had our pleasures in the vicinity. We have strolled by the gurgling streamlet, and in the groves, and down the fields into the little dell where the pond quietly reposes, over which hangs many a rambling branch and thrifty bramble, and where we have taken the pleasant gudgeon and other inmates of the little lake. We can dwell upon the past with peculiar delight, when we think of the first blush of sweet morning—odorous morn—when every flower of the

field was fresh with its own beauty, and every path exhaled that agreeable combination of pleasing scents—the breathings of the mead and the upland, which, like the fragrant breath of the cow, indicates and promotes health in every vein. We know its effects when we have left the great city for the quiet joys of the rural village; and while new life then appeared to be the result, we only contemplate scenes we may never see again, with a deeper devotion to Him, the great Author of creation and the pervading Spirit of all things, which gave in past hours those well-remembered delights of the purest description, and such as leave no sting behind. The striking difference there is between a people of high moral feeling, and those whose pursuits are of an ignoble and humbling character, are so apparent that they need but be mentioned to convey just sentiments to the upright mind. The former are as the emanations of heavenly light;—the latter, the murky broodings of the worst passions that occupy the human breast, only to injure the fair and beautiful fabric, by which man was made to adorn the sphere in which he is found.

It is observed, that the present mode of writing the name of this village, Hempsted or Hempstead, is that least authorised by analogy or ancient usage. We think it might well be written Elmstead; for it is the place where the elm—the wych elm—so useful to the wheelwright, naturally flourishes. Evelyn—judicious Evelyn—commends the timber on account of its toughness and long-endurance; and this has made it, we suppose, so desirable for *grave* purposes, as the company of undertakers can amply testify.

Let us, then, go over to the Church-yard—we need not point it out, for the Church-tower is so lofty: situated as it is upon a hill—a steepish hill—it is everywhere visible, now we are in the village-street. This tower commands an

extensive view northward, in which Lavenham Church is stated to be visible. But passing through the Church, we will descend below, where there are two vaults, occupied by a numerous assemblage of the Harvey family of different periods—many in lead, made according to the human figure, and among them—honoured man!—the great Dr. Harvey, the discoverer of the most important fact in physical science—the circulation of the blood. His discovery has eternized his memory, but here his dust reposes with many now unknown to fame. In 1578, he was born in a humble dwelling in Folkestone,—became physician to two of our Kings, James I. and Charles I.—was elected president of his College in his absence,—settled his paternal estate upon that institution, and brought the deeds, and presented them himself to the College,—and died June 3rd, 1657, at the age of eighty, full of honours. Admiral Sir Eliab Harvey, formerly Member of Parliament for Essex, and one of those brave men who supported Lord Nelson at Trafalgar, likewise reposes here, the last of his family, the estates having been divided among his daughters, as there was no son living to succeed him. He paid an annual visit, while he was able to do so, to the great oak, standing on Mr. Mial's farm, in this parish, now the property of the Hon. Robert C. C. Fane, Commissioner of Bankrupts, who married first one of the Admiral's daughters. Since then this noble specimen of British woods has been considerably injured by the fall of one of its mighty arms; but its size is still calculated to astonish the spectator, who must view with regret those indications of decay in this majestic tree,—the impoverished branches—which carry themselves so pitifully, in their denuded condition, at the summit of the whole.

Robert de Watervil held the lordship of Hempsted under



Richard Fitz Gilbert at the Domesday Survey. His son Sir Robert succeeded him, and lived at Hempsted in the times of King Richard and King John; and by Maud his wife, he had Sir William, to whom, in 1253, King Henry III. granted a charter of free warren in his lordship of Hempsted and Pansfield. His son and successor—the second Sir William—married Theresa, daughter and heiress of Sir Robert Roos, of Radwinter.

Hempsted consists of straggling houses, and was formerly celebrated for large dairies, which are now much diminished. The growth of corn and fattening bullocks, have the preference under the existing system: and these give but little trouble to the housewives of the present generation.

We will not venture further on this occasion: we have seen the village at all seasons—and the ashes of one whose memory is fondly cherished rest on the eastern side of the Church-yard. It was, we well know, an affecting sight to witness her departure, and so was the committal of her remains, among a crowd of villagers and others, to their long repose. The rain fell on the weeping group that followed; and the day has a memorable retrospective character: but it is one of the scenes in life's stirring drama that have gone by, and serves now for appending a moral to remembrances of other times, but with a flattering hope that a bright and beautiful day is still to come, when the virtuous and the good shall meet again—never more to part.

*August, 1843.*

## No. 9.—HADSTOCK.

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TRULY we fear the demand may be thought unreasonable by our claiming so much time for this locality, but it seems as if we had nearly exhausted our thread, while we are sure that we shall leave at the end a knot to be unravelled by some more able writer. Of this we are satisfied, our subject is by no means worn thread-bare, although we have well nigh consumed the material with which, on this occasion, we entered upon our sketching. There is, we feel, a very great difference between the sketchings of the limner and the writer; those of the former may command admiration at the very first view, while the more detailed or elongated workings of the pen, need attention to ascertain whether they are justly entitled to any notice whatever. But our consolation is this, that we have at times supplied a vacant column in a highly-respectable and ably-conducted paper, and we have also had the personal pleasure of enlarging upon scenes dear to our feelings and our home-bred joys for half a century.

Leaving the Castle and Castle Street upon our left, we enter now upon the Linton road, where we pass Beans's Ropery and the Pound. For very many years this sanctuary for strayed beaves and others, especially that insinuating quadruped, the roving ass, was at the south-west corner of Walden Common; but it became too dilapidated for sea-

sonable renewal, and the noble lord of the manor then constructed a more substantial receptacle upon the present site.

We shortly leave, also to the east, the road to Byrd's farm, and further on, New-houses. Before the inclosure took place we remember the stile and the path opposite the latter, where in the meadows the school-boy thought himself well occupied in the full enjoyment of the freedom allowed him, while the domine looked on, or conned his able lesson for the Sabbath that was to come. Half a mile beyond, we pass, on the left, Westley farm. We can never forget our visits to this home of the Riders, nor our happy goings through the corn-fields, nor the full participation in so many farm-house doings, that could not fail to impart pleasure to the school-boy's breast.

Since then, but somewhat further on, has sprung up an anomalous building, singular and varied. The builder, we believe, was his own architect, and he has therefore followed his own taste in a manner strikingly remarkable. The passer by might ask, in these days of Puseyism, Is it a religious structure? but the dimensions, upon closer examination, would reply—there is not space within for a large fraternity; yet, he might be told, there are considerable internal conveniences, and such a domain attached to it as might recommend it to many an inmate. It is called The Hall; and we are sure that if we had not given it especial notice we might have been fairly charged with overlooking a peculiar feature in the parochial landscape, on the northern-side of Walden.

Also on the left, after passing some neat and pretty dwellings, all of recent origin, we come to two very tasty cottages, built by the late Jabez Gibson, Esq. They are to the right of the road leading up to his favourite retreat

Rowley Hill. What pleasure he took in giving more character to the scenery of his birth-place, we well know; and we think with a brother's regard of his unceasing activity, of his encouraging smile, and of his zealous feeling in all matters, having improvement for their object, and benevolence for their end. Cut off, by an all-wise Providence, in the midst of his days, his removal still seems to have been so sudden as to have astounded our recollection, while it opened up the floodgates of emotion with a force that was utterly uncontrollable. Peace to his dear and honoured memory! But his name and his excellencies shall live in the fondest remembrance so long as life continues.

Rowley Hill is very pleasantly situated; and Mr. Gibson's altering hand is impressed upon the grounds, which, with their attendant capabilities, afford opportunity for further improvement. It was in 1840, two years after his lamented decease, the house, through the kindness of a friend, became the sojourn of a Christian Minister of Walden, whose health seemed to be materially affected by consumption. On the last Sunday in 1839, he preached an impressive sermon from Job, "When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return." Had he said months, it would have been every way applicable to his own case; for on the 14th of June following he delivered his last discourse from the words of Paul, "He staggered not at the promises of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." Here closed his ministerial duties. We recollect the morning; and though sanguine himself, it was truly remarked that he would never more ascend the same stairs,—nor did he. He returned to Rowley Hill, and though he left it once or twice for a few hours, in nine days more his death took place. It was a beautiful, quiet morning, and in this tranquil seclusion and

calm abode, the good man breathed his last, never, we believe, for a moment staggering through failing faith, but strong in the assurance how precious Christ would ever be to all believers. His remains were removed in the twilight of the day to his own abode, followed by his widow and a few attendant friends; but he still lives in the affectionate regards of many who survive him—many who felt that while preaching as a dying man to dying men, he did so with a force and an energy that was never before so strongly marked, even when he stood up in the zenith of his mental powers.

On the opposite side of the road is Great Grimsditch wood, believed by Lord Braybrooke to have been a military station. Of this, looking both at name and situation, there is but little doubt; while further on, at Little Walden, recent discoveries have shewn that there the Romans had a station in the time of the Emperor Trajan, judging from a coin of his found with glass vessels, urns, ornaments, rings, &c. &c. This was in a fine field of rising ground at Burnett End or Burntwood End, from a wood said to have been burnt there, also in the time of the Romans. It would appear that this was one of the connecting links between their numerous other stations in this vicinity, at a period when the country was much more wooded, and when keeping up a communication with their forces and domiciles was of the highest importance to their personal security and continued success.

At Little Walden we continue our ramble to the right, and after passing the road that leads to Ravenstock Green and Little Walden Park, we come to Mitchell's farm. These places imperceptibly bring before us some of their departed occupants. We need no witch of Endor to fan our purpose in this respect. Adams of Mitchell's (not old



Adam—he had been dead long before, except in the corruption of our nature),—Adams of Mitchell's was a patronymic for many years so truly familiar to every parochial mind, that we miss the good man on juries, in the market, and on the road; and we imperceptibly sigh after our fallen fellows, while we think of his blue coat and gilt buttons, as something of a Windsor uniform—the distinguishing attire peculiar at that period to the lord of Mitchell's. He died before railroads came into fashion, or he might have considered an iron highway better far than the one which then existed between Walden and Linton. This was little more than a watercourse; it was much the same, we think, for many generations, as when the Romans left it—till at length it was thought utterly unimprovable—and so a new one was made to its right: the hills were lowered, and a spacious well-conditioned highway was left in its stead, which may now be travelled with perfect safety, to the credit of the borough, and the comfort of many who necessarily, week by week, enter Walden in this direction. Ask where the old road took its course a few years ago, and you are pointed to some awful hollows, most unfriendly to springs and patent wheels; and when the present generation shall have passed away, it will soon become a tradition of the most exciting character as to where ran the Roman road, which our fathers appear to have traced, for so many ages, without any adequate attempt to amend the way.

Yet this was the public road to Little Walden Park, which is now occupied as a farm-house—part of the estate of the Marquis of Bristol. In 1578, a year memorable for Queen Elizabeth's second visit to Audley End, the Corporation books shew that 2s. were paid for "mendynge the way at Little Walden Park." Much repair, it is evident, was not thought necessary, but it is clear also, that the

ways were very discouraging at a much later period than this Queen's time. We lately read in an interesting work—'The Private Correspondence of Lady Jane Cornwallis, 1613—1644' (published last year by Lord Braybrooke), of the bad ways even at Cambridge, in 1624. Mr. Bacon writing to his "sweet harte" and wife—Lady Jane— informs her that he could not attempt visiting her at London, with convenience or security, though the journey from Cambridge was not much, as he was "altogether unprovided for these *very fowle waies*." Good Mr. Sutton, founder of the Charter House, by will dated 1611, left £66. 13s. 4d. towards mending the highways between Linton and Walden. He knew how bad they were, for he lived at Castle Camps; and as he passed this road, or by Ashdon, his benevolent mind contemplated the comfort that would arise from good roads; and with the like good feeling, he had an eye to the state of other highways in Essex and Middlesex, including those between Ashdon and Walden.

The Mansion of Little Walden Park is large, is situated near the boundary of Hadstock parish, and commands a very extensive view. After passing Monk's Hall, by the new road, we shortly enter upon this parish, which is peculiarly situated, as from Bantom Upper Stile, it is said, the view extends to Horseheath, in Cambridgeshire,—the Gogmagog Hills,—the Bartlow Hills,—and a vast extent of country round. We need not be surprised that the Romans had Hadstock then for a point of observation, nor that, from the locality, it has been the scene of other inroads. The pen of a Walter Scott might people the dells and byways here with many bands of former times, until the theme excited an interest as deep as that of Abbotsford. It must have been a corroding sense of aggravated wrongs that

could have led, as tradition avers, to the skin of human beings being affixed to the doors of the Church, as a constant memorial, to those passing in and out, of a bondage dissolved. The skin of a Dane—some say a Danish King—(a portion of it is deposited in the Saffron Walden Museum) was till recently seen upon the entrance to Hadstock Church, covered with iron-work: the iron remains, but the skin has been taken away by degrees. So also at Copford, in this county, the Church doors are covered with ornamental flourishes of iron-work, and under them, as we have read, may yet be seen the remains of a kind of tanned skin, thicker than parchment (this description is correct as to the specimen mentioned as being preserved in the Museum) which are recorded to have been the skins of Danes who broke into and robbed that Church. England never could have submitted for such a lengthened period, to so many foreign wrongs, of which the Danes eagerly advanced their share, had her people then been an united people. Who can trace history, at the periods referred to, without deepest feeling, that the fair fields of our father-land should, for so many centuries, have proved the arena of such bloody contests?—contests, too, which still deluged many a sweet locality, even at later periods, when foreign dominion was looked upon as a tale of other times.

The Church is considered a large one for a village. We leave it on the high ground on our right, as we descend the road into the vale where the principal dwellings are found. Just look into this sacred edifice, and remark the screen which exhibits a curious specimen of carved work—a fox delivering a grave lecture to a flock of geese, who are attentively listening to his paternal admonitions. This is deemed a satire against the monkish hypocrisy of the times—another memorial of wrongs and misdeeds which it was, no



HADSTOCK CHURCH.

PALMER'S PATENT GEOPHOTOGRAPHY





doubt, hoped had gone by—and gone by for ever. What then can be the reason why, in our day, we have the pain of hearing of the inclination and desire—the busy tampering—to restore a system—one of mummery and dead works—and utterly opposed to that foundation of an Englishman's faith—the faith of a Protestant—the Holy Scriptures? Can it be the sign of the second infancy of a church, many of whose honoured sons have done, and are still doing, great good to the common family of humanity? Pity 't is—deepest pity, that man, made after the similitude of God, should fritter away his noble and heaven-born faculties—as Solomon did in the period of his dotage—in bowing and stooping to idolatrous desecrations of the temple devoted to the maintenance of our common faith, and the glory of the Most High! How magnificently different are the works of the Eternal! We see it in that ever-flowing stream, which, passing under the Church-yard wall, affords an ample supply of pure unadulterated water, of which the villagers gladly avail themselves. The well—St. Botolph's well—is near the Church; and may it long continue a symbol of the purity of that heavenly lore which should proceed from that desk where the Rev. Addisson Carr,—so long known and so much respected in this district—pursued the even tenor of his sacred calling for so many years.

The lordship of Hadstock is, we believe, in the Malthus family. We do not pretend to know whether facts for the Malthusian Theory were drawn from this locality; but we think benevolence of character has been at the root of many a system highly prized by its advocate, though startled in its progress by much opposition. This manor again brings before us that character, dear to Essex and other places for his unquestionable philanthropy, Thomas Sutton, Esq.,

already mentioned, to whom this manor, with that of Littlebury, was granted by Queen Elizabeth, in 1560.

We have already referred to the contests which have here taken place: among others, we know that a party of the royalists, in 1649, shewed themselves in arms about Walden, and were routed at Linton by a party of horse, under the command of Major Sparrow, so that it is probable the engagement was followed up through Hadstock parish. But the villagers sleep on, as the weary sleep upon the field of battle, utterly unconscious of the troubles of their forefathers, or that that tree which is now seen towering in all its nobility was watered at its young root by the tears of the widow and the orphan, bereft of their earthly protector in some nocturnal fray or hostile feud, where the stake at issue was an uneasy crown.

Having visited the several localities to which the various roads of Walden naturally conduct us (there are many bye roads, each with a legendary tale, or other noticeable character)—we now propose, if circumstances should concur, to trace, in another sketch or two, the Town itself, as a concise summary of what the place has been or now is, and then retire into our usual quietude, considering that if we have had the pleasure and delight of interesting an intelligent few with our local scenes and traditions, we have also agreeably occupied many moments that seemed to ourselves to be linked with indisposition, and therefore inapplicable and unsuited to the energetic purposes of busy and more useful life.

*October 17, 1843.*

## No. 10.—SAFFRON WALDEN.

WE have so long hesitated at taking up the pen in order to make some record of this borough, while indisposition has also caused such an interference with our former train of thought, when we dwelt upon the characteristics of this locality, that we fear now we shall not by any means do common justice to the subject: yet we feel pledged to make such a record, and we therefore recommence this series of sketches by detailing matters which we very naturally hope will interest a few.

We will enter the Town down the High Street, as our forefathers have done before us: it is the natural opening in that direction. Lord Braybrooke, to whose history we have been oftentimes indebted both for pleasure and assistance, remarks that the town must have been of considerable size early in the 15th century; and High Street was then among its most prominent streets, containing, as it does now, many good houses; but, from its situation, and its connection with various eminent persons in previous times, Walden, it seems to us, was of some consequence at a much earlier period. In 1042, in Edward the Confessor's time, Ansgar, his Master of the Horse, had Walden, or Waledon as it was then denominated; and twenty-four years after, William the Conqueror bestowed it upon Geoffrey de Man-

deville, who first gave life to the place. History has not unfolded itself prior to the 11th century, and we are left, therefore, to conjecture as to the people who first planted their dwelling-houses in the fruitful vale; but the probability is that, long before, it was a favourite retreat, and that Britons, Romans, and Saxons successively occupied a spot where they found the fields gave their increase, and the woods and groves supplied ample material for constructing abodes and those other purposes of human life which came to be appreciated as the wants of mankind increased, and the manners of more cultivated kingdoms spread their influence over this.

A part of High Street was formerly called Kuckstolls Street, and many still remember the pond which was on the site of Hill House, built by the late Mr. Henry Archer. This appellation of the street was, doubtless, from the practice—more honoured in the breach than the observance—a practice of early date, and peculiarly suited to populous communities—of stilling arbitrarily the human tongue; but the practice is traceable downwards in the Town Records, as in 1552, as previously remarked, a new stool appears to have been made here for the public good; and it was for setting up the aforesaid stool—"cooking stole"—in 1613 that the large sum of £1. 9s. 3d. was paid. The pond was useful in our times in some respects, but detrimental in others, from occasional overflowings, while it added little to the beauty of the locality in the *great* street, as it has been termed. The capacity of the street was never so apparent as now: formerly there were trees in several parts of it; and at that period the road was no road at all, according to the present macadamized acceptation. An old person, born before the middle of the last century, once told us that, when a boy, the ruts were so formidable that he could

sit with his legs in them, resting on the excluded material as a seat, which formed an embankment on either side.

But improvements have rapidly stridden in the last century. The road—the high-road—then passed through the slade at that part of the street next the Abbey and George Lanes, and a footpath for pedestrians was on either side of the street; that portion of the slade was necessarily arched over after a time. In the Town Records we find an ominous entry, in 1653, of a shilling “paid for making clean the slade, at Lord Whitlock’s request.” It must have proved, we regret to say, very disagreeable to an occasional visitant to have called forth such a request; but it is an additional argument that, for the sake of the health of the inhabitants of every place, offensive water-courses should be remedied as speedily as possible.

Progressive intelligence, that produces union for the general good, has shewn itself in Walden, as in other parts of this growing realm; and many improvements could be named which sprang out of the noble principle of acting voluntarily and disinterestedly, to counteract admitted evils. The same spirit producing enquiry appears to have led the human mind to think and act for itself; as in 1639 the Society of Friends became an established body in this place, worshipping God according to their own views of holy writ. But, we lament to say, they suffered persecution here, as well as in other parts, for conscience sake; as three shillings were paid at the Bell, in 1664, “when the Quakers were committed:” but little was done in those times, either good or bad, loyally or disloyally, without alehouse refreshments. Their Meeting-house, situated in the High Street, was opened in 1676, and this worthy body continued steadfast to their faith in those persecuting times; for seven years after—in 1683—fourpence was paid “for nailing up



the Quaker's door twice." Well might they, with other conscientious professors, sigh for a change of dynasty ; but times are happily altered : and now it is a pleasing feature among the characteristics of this borough, that "the Friends" are some of the most eminent and respectable of its denizens, and may fairly be called its most liberal benefactors.

Not far from this Meeting-house is the residence of C. T. Master, Esq., the Town-clerk. This was built by Captain Collin, who lived there till he had erected and occupied a larger house in Church Street. It was afterwards held by the Martin family, and subsequently by Mr. George Walton, whose ability and peculiarities are well remembered.

The next house was occupied by Miss Sutherland, whose father, said to have borne "a most amiable character," was Minister of the Independent Meeting. She and her friend Miss Fuller became acquainted with the officers of a regiment of Dragoons that came to the town, and, lacking the consent of Mr. Davey, her guardian, she took leave, in company with one of them, Mr. Woodcock, and was married to him at Walden Church. We believe the union was both respectable and a happy one.

On the west-side of the High Street is Hogs-Green, near to which, it is understood, there were vineyards ; and in an ancient house, now the property of the relict of that excellent man, the Rev. Robert Fiske, of Elmdon, but formerly belonging to the Myddylton family, called Hogs-Green House, is a curious mantel-piece, carved with the figure of a Ton, in a scroll, between the syllables MYD and DYL, making the name of its former possessor. The letters, as well as the raised work, are formed of twigs of vine leaves and branches, with clusters of grapes, which are introduced on each side of the scroll. This family probably owned also the vineyards.

If the soil was deemed, centuries since, suitable for vines, it was likewise considered adapted for the growth of hops, as there was a hop-ground near Bayley's Lane. That it was good ground for producing saffron its name implies; while of late years it has been distinguished for its floral productions; and several amateurs have had annually some remarkably fine beds of tulips and other bulbous productions.

Saffron is said to have been first cultivated in Walden in the time of Edward III.; in 1444 it was a titheable commodity; in 1481 saffron-gardens are mentioned; in 1518 the owners of certain rude hogs were presented, because they had been found trespassing on the saffron-beds; and the Town Records further shew that it was an article of culture in the reign of Charles II., as in 1663, Pratt was rewarded with fourpence for gathering the heads that were needed to yield one pound of this valuable produce. That it was valuable, and variable, too, in price, we may give the following sums paid for a pound—whether of local cultivation or not—in the three last centuries: 1548, 12s.; 1561, 25s.; 1614, 63s.; 1631, 18s.; 1647, 22s.; 1653, 37s.; 1663, 70s.; 1665, 81s. 10d.; 1688, 83s. 6d.; 1689, 60s.; and 1717, 26s. 6d. In October, 1689, in addition to the saffron, some saffron-heads and flowers were also presented to King William, for which one Henry Rider was paid the sum of 2s. Lord Braybrooke observes that, before the beginning of the last century, the quantity grown at and near Walden annually decreased, and that by the year 1790 it had entirely disappeared from the neighbourhood. We believe Mr. Alderman Fiske was one of the last to cultivate it from a regard to its long association with his native town.

Let us pass down to Bridge End, and then curtail our sketch that we may renew our notes at an early opportunity.

In its vicinity, eastward, and in grounds where we loved to ramble in our boyhood, there are highly interesting gardens, formed by Francis Gibson, Esq., and long may they add to his enjoyment and that of his family! On the opposite or western side of the road is one of the new Lodges on Lord Braybrooke's estate, at the foot of the hill—Windmill Hill—and at the south-east corner of the land which was added to the park by his highly-respected parent. The present lord has also much improved this part by covering in a portion of the slade over which the bridge was thrown, and which led to the cognomen, now so well established—of Bridge End. The town's-people had, doubtless, experienced the want of a bridge for a long time, to curb the watercourse; for it was then, and is still, known as Madgate Slade. History avers that, in 1333, Sir Edward de Bohun was drowned crossing a brook near Walden, and was buried in the Abbey. This was probably the brook that still wends its way through the ancient watercourse, which in our times—1795 for instance, (we are grey in years)—was memorably filled to overflowing by the great flood of that year. Other floods are recorded,—which must have been severe visitations at the time in this locality,—namely, in 1555, “a great flood;” and in July, 1769, when a violent storm fell at Walden, and “the lightning split the body of the Church and broke all the windows,” causing damage which it required £200 to repair. A previous record, under date 1445, says—“Great wethering of wind, hayle, snow, rayne, and thunder, with lightning, on Candlemas, when Walden Church and others were sore shaken.” These occurrences must have been felt at Bridge End, Madgate Slade being the receiver of the waters with which a considerable tract of country must have been temporarily deluged by a storm of any severity. These waters, meeting

in a confined situation, caused an overflow of the banks, and rendered rafts necessary to relieve the inhabitants whose abodes joined the slade. In 1795 the temporary confusion was very great, there being no means of judging of the quantity of the coming waters, until they happily began to abate. This is catalogued among events that are past, and the residents consider them no more than those who inhabit the sides of Vesuvius and Etna, whence streams of lava have carried desolation, in so many instances, over happy villages and fruitful plantations. May the vicinity of Bridge End long be ignorant of the damage that might accrue to them from the recurrence of a flood !

*July 4th, 1844.*

## No. 11.—SAFFRON WALDEN.

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IN our last we concluded with Bridge End : we will now return a short distance, and pass up Castle Street—a broad and respectable avenue, whatever may be the character of some of its dwellings at the present period. In former times, it was, no doubt, considered among the great streets of the town ; and one of the chief places of access to the lordly castle of the Mandevilles, the remains of which still distinguish the eastern-end of the street. The town—or its inhabitants—may be said in one sense, and following the example of other places, to have removed westward ; for the most respectable houses are now in the High Street, and other parts of the town in that direction. Yet in the days of the princely Barons of old, the retainers of the family were often passing and repassing this ancient street, the upper or eastern portion of which was, at that period, within the precincts of the castle, while the remainder of the place was most probably in the occupation of the supporters and vassals of the lordly family—the tenants in villanage—men who were glad to rally round some potent chieftain to obtain a nominal security, before equal laws and a wise submission to established rule wrought out that admirable system of public liberty which we now enjoy.

At the west-end of Castle Street, on the north side, is the old Grammar-school, now under alteration and improve-



ments, with the view of being reopened for the benefit of the town and of three villages in its vicinity, which, by its constitution, may send to it a limited number of boys. The earliest schools established at Walden date from 1423: these were under the controul of the neighbouring monastery. From the frequent occurrence of the name of the master of the school for the time-being, as an attesting witness to ancient deeds and other documents, it appears (said the commissioners for enquiry concerning charities, &c.) that a school existed in Walden from a very remote period. The Grammar-school commenced in 1525, when the treasurer and chamberlains of the guild entered into an agreement with the abbot and monastery, and the good dame Jane Bradbury, sister to John Leche, their vicar, for its endowment. This long-sighted woman and her brother erected a school-house and school-room; and she also granted a rent-charge for the support of a priest, and to teach the children grammar, after the order and use of Winchester and Eton. The position of the school is defined as opposite to the lane, called the Vicar's Lane, leading into the Church-yard. It was called Trinity House, and the priest was to live in the house called Trinity College, near the north door of the Church. The following inscription in plaster is now over the entrance to the school-room:—

1655.

AVT DISCE

AVT DOCE

AVT DISCEDE.

William Dawson, afterwards knighted, and described as a profound grammarian, was the first master: the present one is the Rev. John Collins, M.A. of Trinity College, Dublin, and of Queen's College, Cambridge. Sir Thomas

Smyth, whom Lord Braybrooke denominates "one of the most learned writers and eminent statesmen in the reign of Edward VI. and Elizabeth," was educated here; proceeding afterwards to Cambridge, he was considered the best scholar in that university, and in 1538 was appointed public orator. In 1549 he was made Secretary of State; and in 1551 was sent on a splendid embassy to France. Sir Thomas proved himself a benefactor to his native town; and let the boys who may be educated in time to come upon the same foundation emulate his character, of whom it is recorded, that his acquired reputation was such that the most learned members of the university, and many of them his seniors, used to attend him and sit as his scholars.

Higher up the street, on the south side, the Vicarage abuts upon it—and on a high bank, outside its walls, stood recently several trees, which the vicar has taken down. These were the only trees remaining in the streets, with one exception, that had not been planted of late years, as is the case with two opposite the residence of Francis Gibson, Esq., in High Street, near to which, at the corner of Castle Street, is the one referred to.

We have said that the remains of the castle are at the eastern end of the street. It was built soon after the Norman Conquest by Geoffrey de Mandeville, who was truly a powerful baron, for he received from William, his chief, 117 lordships (39 in Essex) as a reward for his eminent services. Geoffrey thought well of Walden, and he soon began to mix the flints of the soil in a way that has, in a great measure, defied the ravages of time. The immolating hand has, however, sapped a great portion of the structure, for it was much larger than any external appearance at this time would warrant an idea of: parts have been taken down, and the site of the Bury-hill cleared within

the memory of man ; the portions removed were appropriated to mending the roads ; but the alarm of invasion led to a small oval addition on the western wall, in order to make it one of a continuation of signal stations, when volunteers and an expected foe, were among the features of the day.

Here, on the Bury-hill, stands also a more modern building—the Saffron Walden Museum,—and with it the Agricultural Hall, constructed at Lord Braybrooke's expense, for the accommodation of that flourishing and useful institution, The Saffron Walden Agricultural Society, of which his Lordship is a most efficient President. We say useful institution, because, while we know that the politics of the day are professedly excluded from its meetings, the good feeling it has engendered, and the encouragement it has yearly afforded to the labouring population, have proved its beneficial character : any one remembering the circle of happy faces they may have seen assembled at a district ploughing match, —the labourer's holiday, —must have augured favourably of its operations, which we deem a great encouragement to any society so constituted, to pursue an onward course.

The Museum claims a special note. It was formed in 1834 by a small society, whose main design was to promote the study and extend the knowledge of natural history in all its branches. The trustees, however, were not unmindful of the arts ; and the large collection, for a local museum, made in ten years proves what may be done by the efforts of a few energetic individuals, deriving, too, encouragement and support from a judicious neighbourhood. The late Jabez Gibson, Esq.—that worthy and excellent man, whose early removal was so deeply felt in this vicinity,—was indeed zealous in its establishment, and

contributed to its support with a liberal hand and an intelligent and zealous mind. Much was he missed ; but this Museum and other public objects to which he devoted his energies form his best and noblest monument: his remains repose in the Friends' Meeting yard, without a stone to shew the resting place of his honoured dust—but it is known to affection's eye, and it is regarded continually by the kindred heart.

The Common, of which we have spoken before in our visits to the villages around, is hard by the Bury-hill. We find that in the 26th of Henry VIII. James Williamson, of Walden, farmer of the lordship, bound himself in five marks sterling with the treasurer and chamberlains, that they should without interruption keep their fairs on the green called the "Comyn," as they always had been wont to do ; and the treasurer was always to cause the ditches to be made, so "that carts make no comyn way over the said Comyn." In 1695 the corporation paid 1s. 2d. for ditching the Common, and, in 1699, 15s. for setting sixty young trees to fill up the walk at the end of the Common, and a further sum of 2s. 6d. in the year following for other trees. It was also in 1699 that they expended 15s. for cutting the maze at the eastern end. A MS. in the Bodleian Library says it was originally made by a shoemaker. This now ancient work has not been neglected, or it could not have been continued in so perfect a state. The late Mr. William Robinson, who built Grove-house, as well as the curious and convenient residence of the present Chief Magistrate, Hannibal Dunn, Esq., situated in Market Street, was the means of its being recut and turfed with grass in his time ; and in 1841 it was again renewed, for which the inhabitants in general very cheerfully contributed.

This Mr. Robinson published an account of the festival which took place on Walden Common at the return of

peace, in 1814; also an appeal to the legislature on behalf of the peasantry with regard to athletic exercises. It appears by his account that 2,600 persons were entertained on the 26th of July, 1814, by the subscriptions of their wealthier neighbours, at an expense of £310. 12s. 11d. A similar festival was held in 1838, on the day of our beloved Queen's coronation. On that event, 4,000 persons were entertained at the charge of £334. 11s. 10d. The tables amply spread for such a multitude—clean and orderly—with the leading inhabitants partaking with them of the satisfactory old English fare, was truly a goodly, cheering sight. There were seventy-five tables in all, arranged in a vast oval; seventy of these had fifty persons each, four others were for the ringers, band, constables, assistants, and tapsters, amounting to 250, and at the remaining one, the stewards were seated. Samuel Fiske, Esq., Mayor, presided at the head of the whole, and the Author at the stewards' table. The salt in 1814 for the 2,600, cost 32s. 11d.; in 1838, for 4,000,—3s. 6d. We will finish our present sketch in the words which conclude a published memorial of one of the most interesting events, in local scenery, of recent times: "To sum up the whole in a few words, it may fairly be stated that in no place in this favoured realm—favoured by Divine Providence with great and peculiar blessings—did a more loyal and joyous assemblage meet than on Walden Common on the day of Queen Victoria's coronation; and that nearly 4,000 persons, including the presidents, stewards, &c., partook of the same fare, while the thousands who witnessed it, exhibited that laudable and praiseworthy feeling which must, while memory endures, leave a pleasurable recollection on the minds of all who shared in the responsibilities and duties of the day."

*July 17th, 1844.*



## No. 12.—SAFFRON WALDEN.

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With this sketch we purpose concluding our series ; and we need therefore compress much of what we have to say into a small compass. We reflect that there may not be many who are so interested as ourselves in the place of our habitation, and that therefore it is becoming in us to talk reasonably, and to imagine that others may have had patience enough for the past, but little or none for any future productions of our historical pen.

In one of the chronicles of Walden Abbey, it is recorded that the Church was consecrated in 1258, on the festival of St. Mark. The present Church, dedicated to St. Mary, was erected in the 15th century, in the reigns of Henry VI. and VII. It is a light and beautiful structure, and with its crocketed spire, set up by Rickman in 1831, appears to advantage, and is a striking feature in the local landscape in every direction. Upon entering the Church, the height and breadth of the nave, as well as the proportion of the piers and arches, and the airy appearance of the whole fabric, cannot fail to rivet the attention : the east end and a portion of the chancel were built, says Lord Braybrooke, by Lord Chancellor Audley, and there he lies interred, with a tomb of black marble—an altar tomb—to tell of his decease in 1544, at the age of 56. It is a mod-

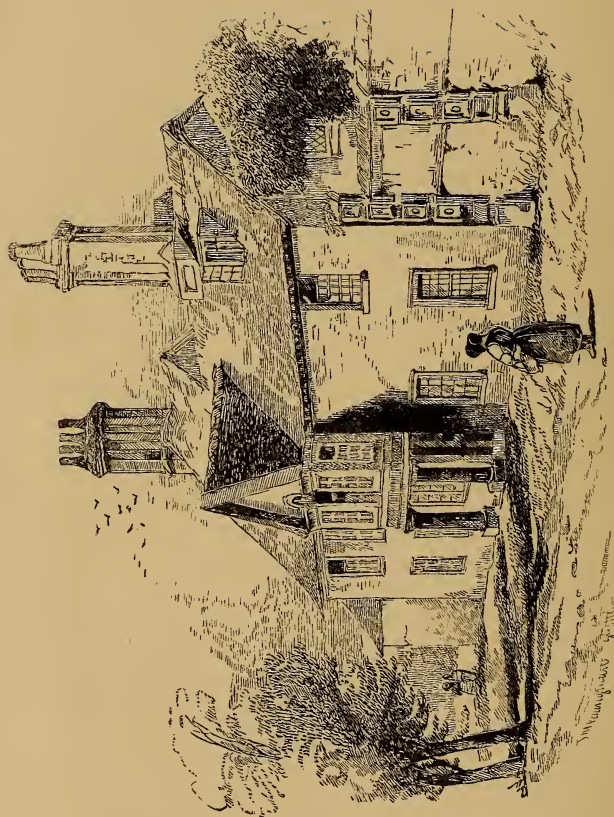
est tomb compared with many erected to the memory of men less eminent, and of minor importance in the stirring and uncertain times in which he took so prominent a part.

From the Church it is but a short distance down to the Market Place. This is much improved within the recollection of some. The old gaol stood at the bottom of the Market Hill, opposite Mr. John Richardson's, and near Mr. Leverett's; its removal from thence was truly most desirable. In 1761 the foundation of the new Town Hall was laid, Mr. William Mapletoft being the Mayor, and a gaol was formed on the ground-floor, which led to the demolition of the old one. The situation of this was afterwards found objectionable from its being open to the road, and a new one was built, partly by subscription, adjoining the town workhouse, on the hill at the top of High Street. Municipal changes have led to this being appropriated to another purpose; and as the establishment of a Poor Law Union and the construction of a union workhouse within the parish, rendered the old town workhouse unnecessary, this, with the gaol, has been converted into dwellings, which has added greatly to the respectability of this—the main entrance into the place. The town workhouse was originated in 1734, and was by no means calculated to maintain that separation of such a number of inmates of various ages, &c., who looked to it for a home, as was consistent with their comfort, or the welfare of the whole.

Having mentioned the Town or Guild Hall, we may here refer to the town authorities. The guild was originated about 1400—Henry IV.; and was incorporated in 1413—Henry V. The guild continued till 1546, the last year of Henry VIII., when it was dissolved. With the incorporation of the guild was procured the grant for a schoolmaster and a priest; the schoolmaster to teach grammar,

as previously remarked. The grant of the market was also obtained, at an annual rent of ten pounds, in lieu of all former tolls, farthings, &c. The cost of the charter was defrayed by contributions, and by enfranchising persons from paying their farthings and rents. In a grant made, 1514, by Henry VIII. to the guild, it is recorded that as he willed to be evermore remembered in their prayers, so he charitably desired that he might be admitted a brother of their order, and his dear wife, Queen Katherine, a sister thereof, while Wolsey and others, ladies included, were also enrolled among the fraternity. Dame Katherine Semer, in her will, deemed herself a foundress. A charter of incorporation was procured for the town, at the intercession of John Smyth, brother to the secretary of state. This was in 1549; and the body-politic was then described as the treasurer and chamberlains and assembly of the village of Walden; twenty-four assistants were to be associated with the treasurer and chamberlains "from the most honest and discreet men of the village aforesaid." Queen Mary, in 1553, confirmed the charter verbatim, as did her sister Elizabeth in 1558. No change in the government of the town appears to have taken place for 125 years. Then Charles II., whose return had been so joyously hailed, invaded the privileges, not only of the city of London, but of some of the lesser corporations. James II., however, in 1685, granted a new charter, incorporating the town, and the burgesses and the inhabitants, by the name of "The Mayor and Aldermen of the town of Saffron Walden, in the county of Essex." The charter was renewed in 1694, by King William III., and James Robinett was named therein as the first Mayor. The Municipal Reform Act has now altered the constitution of the borough once again, by which its governing powers consist of a Mayor, four Aldermen, and Councillors to the number of sixteen in all.





THE PRIORY.

PALMER'S PATENT GLYPTOGRAPHY



We remember the old Market-house, which stood at the north-east corner of the Market Place. It had a weigh-bridge connected with it, which is now removed to a situation near to the premises of Messrs. Emson, by whose father it was purchased of the corporation. The Market-house had stood its day, and was more venerable than ornamental.

Behind this Market-house still remains the house built by Mr. Robert Mapletoft, upon the site of one of an ancient date. This gentleman, who died in 1782, and is said to have been very clever in his profession as a surgeon, was the son of Mr. William Mapletoft, during whose mayoralty the foundation of the Town Hall was laid. The former house is described as a large and very old house, with a great porch to it, like an old-fashioned church porch. It had also a little garden and its flowers, with pales, in front of the Market Place. This property, with two houses behind, one known as the Priory, abutting on the common, all belonged to a wealthy family—Major Holgate's. The centre house is now completely obliterated: Mr. Maurice, said to have been an odd man, lived in this till he bought the Priory, where Colonel Chapman, who married one of the Holgates, lived and died. Mr. Maurice took down a great part of the Priory, and new-fronted it with red bricks. It is now occupied as a ladies' school; but the most interesting circumstance connected with it is the belief that it was the residence occasionally of Sir Thomas Smyth: the principal room and staircase, still remaining, evidence that it was intended for an individual of some consequence. The piers of the old garden gate are yet in existence, and now form part of a summer-house nearly overgrown with ivy, and constructed, twenty years since, by the resident owner of the house built by Mr. Mapletoft, to which property is now attached a large portion of Sir Thomas

Smyth's garden, and a considerable extent of the old wall, with its projecting coping, of the period, we believe, of Queen Elizabeth.

In the opening southward, between the Rose-and-Crown Inn and the Town Hall, houses stood in our time nearly across from the one owned and occupied by the late Mr. Robert Paul, who died Mayor in 1839 (the Bell Inn of older times), to the White-Horse, leaving only a narrow road for carriages. Mr. Paul was active in promoting a great improvement in this street, by the removal of the houses in question; and now it forms a capacious approach to the new and increasing cattle market laid out in 1831 upon the site of the Eight-Bells Public-house, which sign was then carried to a house at Bridge End.

Alterations of this order led to the covering in of the slade or watercourse passing parallel with East Street: but no improvement was more apparent than arching over the part adjoining the Common, by which an excellent road has been made to the west end of that most valuable acquisition to the town—whether for useful purposes, or the pleasurable recreation of the youthful and other residents.

The Old-Bell was sold in 1735 by Edward Ball to Abraham Impey. The house on its northern side was then the property of John Ingrey, but in the occupation of John Kidman, and had been sometime a part of the Bell: it now belongs to Mr. Thomas Patient. Mr. Ball reserved to himself, on the south side, a messuage called the Cockpit House: likewise, for a time, part of the Bell property, with yards and other conveniences, then in the occupation of John Smith. The public-houses in the vicinity of the market in former periods appear to have been more numerous than now (the house south of Mr. Paul's was formerly the Black-Boy)—from which it may be inferred

that the trade was then far different or more considerable than at this period. The number of resident gentlemen within the memory of the aged, evidenced, too, the respectability of the town and its desirable situation.

The trade is now well understood, and is apportioned to the place and its neighbourhood; its only manufacture of any consequence is the article of malt, for which the town has long been celebrated. There were maltings, it appears, in the 14th century, the time of Richard II., since, as his commissioners sat here, as already stated, to enquire after rents and other things due to the King, they found that every man was to pay for a quarter of malt bought or sold, one farthing, as every brewer had to pay the like sum for every quarter brewed to sell.

From frequent mention of them in ancient records, it is evident that a great many woolstaplers had their homes at Walden: and the days of Bishop Blaize are still remembered by old inhabitants. We believe the last procession was held in 1778; and so important was the trade they carried on to the good of the town, that the mayor and corporation formed part of the throng which annually proceeded beyond the bounds of the parish—to Newport and Littlebury for instance,—passing Audley End. The feathers, caps, &c. by which the staplers and their people were distinguished were all formed of wool, dyed for the purpose. There was a large band of music, with a bishop, chaplains, shepherds, and shepherdesses; one of the latter carried a lamb in her lap. Orations were made at the places where the procession stopped; and when it returned a large party dined at the Rose Inn, the bells rang merrily, while the company that assembled on the occasion, from various parts, led to our informant's intimating that Walden never was fuller than on these days of public animation. Machi-

nery and manufactories on such an extensive scale as now distinguish certain districts of England, have put Bishop Blaize to flight, and the hands that would once have been engaged in preparing the yarn, &c. in agricultural parts are now employed in other ways.

One remark more will suffice as to the Market Place. From the opening to the Butter Market to the house of Mr. Councillor Burrows, ran in former times a little street, occupying of course a considerable part of this approach to the Market Place. There were several houses in it; and the removal of them may be classed with those material alterations which have, within a century, added greatly to the appearance and comfort of the town.

From a previous reference, it will be perceived that Walden had a cock-pit. We also know that bull-baiting was deemed an essential affair, for the corporation paid in 1654, four shillings for a rope for this purpose; and again in 1712, five shillings for a rope and collar. These, we believe, are now deposited, as the memorials of a by-gone age, in the Saffron Walden Museum, while the public taste has happily, in a great measure, been generally turned from such inhuman sports, to the more sober pleasures which ploughing-matches and exhibitions of flowers and fruits, and similar reasonable matters, are calculated to afford. Manners too, we fancy, have generally improved since the 15th century (or even later times), when Roger, the parish chaplain, as Lord Braybrooke intimates from the manorial rolls, was censured for having struck a neighbour with his fist, and torn his clothes, the selfsame Roger being also further denounced before the court as a common-player at handball.

Walden has not had, of late, any regal visit; but several are recorded as having taken place, from very early periods.

Margaret of Anjou, Queen of Henry VI. came hither in 1452. England had never beheld a Queen more worthy of a throne, and no woman surpassed her in beauty, while her courage was high and undoubted. She is described, too, as having been formed by Heaven to supply to the royal husband the qualities which he required, in order to become a great King; and yet the Walden ringers of that day could not welcome her with a peal, for which ungallant conduct they were duly fined. Queen Elizabeth overlooked this slight to her sex, or was prepared, perhaps, with a heavier fine had she not been welcomed as her beauty merited, and came twice—in 1571 and 1578. King James I. came also twice,—in 1610 and again in 1614. Charles I. and his Queen came in 1631; and Charles II. thought so highly of Audley End and its vicinity, that he desired to purchase that princely mansion, to make it a palace. The estate was conveyed to his Majesty in 1669, and the Court was established there in the following year. He continued to resort hither till nearly the conclusion of his reign: his last visit to Newmarket, whither it is supposed he went from Audley End, was in 1683; his death took place early in 1685. His royal successor King James II. in his first year, renewed the Town Charter, but did not honour the place with a visit. King William III., however devoted to it an early attention, for he came to Walden in the first year of his reign—in 1689—as is recorded in the mayor's book, for Mr. Reynolds, and other gentlemen of Walden, waited upon his Majesty, at Audley End, with an address, accompanied by a silver plate, which cost £4. 6s. 6d., and the usual oblation to royalty—some saffron, for which £3. 13s. was paid. No official mention is made of the corporation, but the corporation-purse defrayed the expenses.

Walden, in 1647, was the head quarters of the army



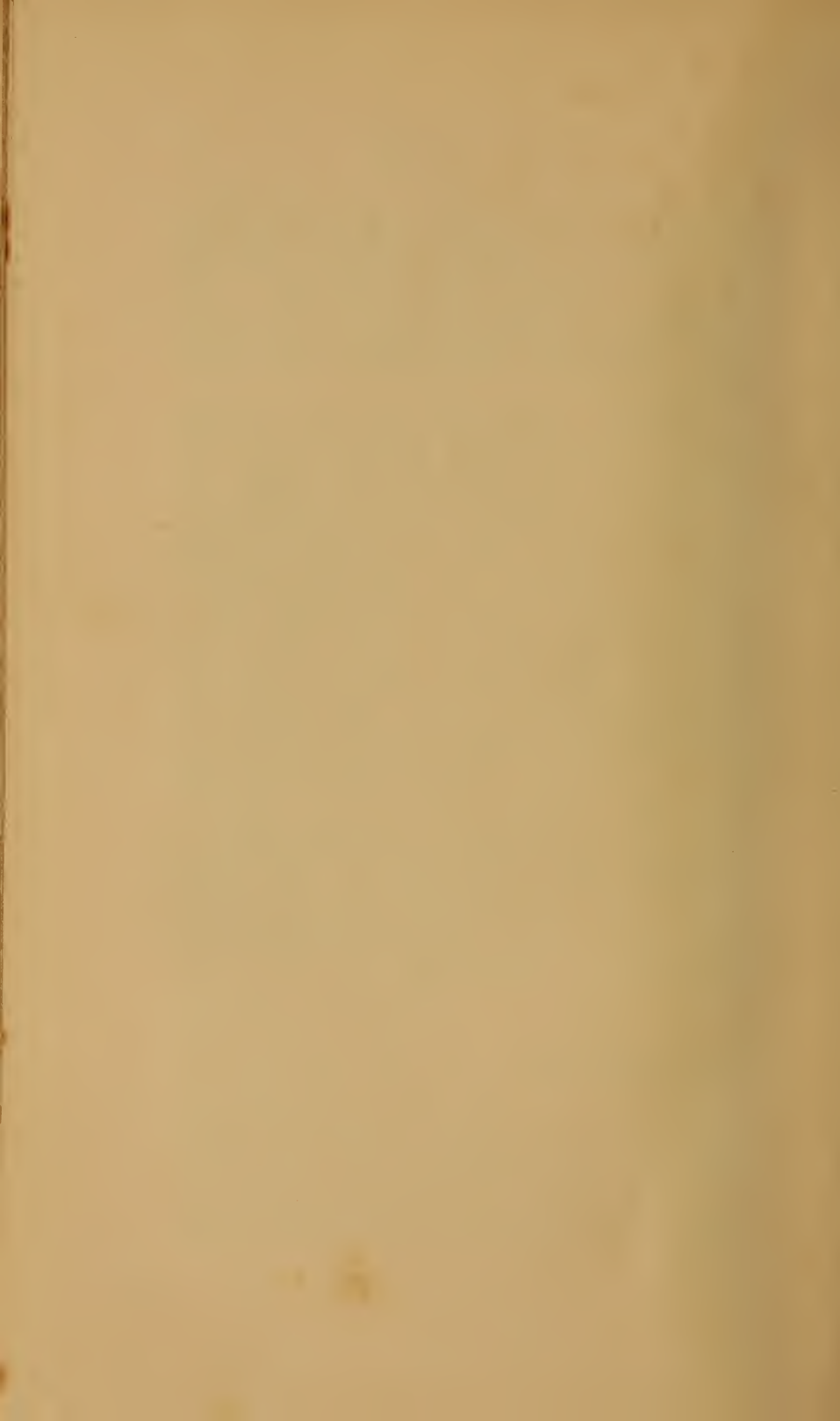
under General Fairfax ; and the commissioned officers assembled for deliberation within the church. The troops had come hither suddenly from Nottingham, in consequence of the wish expressed in parliament by the presbyterian leaders, that the army should be disbanded ; but after remonstrances and agitation, the army was, for awhile, satisfied on this head, and the General, at the latter end of May, removed his head-quarters to Bury St. Edmund's. In June, at a council of war, held at Newmarket, the troops subscribed a solemn engagement, not to suffer themselves to be divided or disbanded without full satisfaction, a measure in accordance with the feelings, at least, of the common people of Essex. Walden, indeed, appears to have been happily exempted, in the civil wars, from the bloodshed which so frequently attended them. In the period of the Commonwealth, 1653, Lord Whitlock visited the town, and was presented with sack and oysters, while his lady received the royal present of saffron, a pound of which then cost £1. 17s.

A diligent enquirer might detail many other circumstances of considerable or higher interest to the reader—at any rate, if he be a resident ; but space and time preclude much additional matter on this occasion. Yet we cannot break off from our pleasing subject without another reference to Audley End, so striking an object, and so ornamental a theme in these our sketchings. We concur with a modern writer, that “its internal grandeur and external beauties, replete with all the varieties of hill and vale, wood and water, are rarely to be combined in such limits.” The mansion was thirteen years in building—from 1603 to 1616—and was doubtless a truly noble fabric till 1721, when, through the advice of heavy Sir John Vanburgh, three sides of the great quadrangle were demolished.

Still view the fabric in every direction, and it may truly be termed a noble dwelling, but no position strikes us more forcibly than the eastern front, viewed from the side of the Deer-park. Its pallatial character, with its trees and gardens, is there very imposing, and resting in quiet splendour amidst such agreeable scenery, it cannot fail to awaken admiration.

The impress of natural beauty is, we think, very perceptible around this favoured place. Stukely visited our valley, and saw it encompassed by distant and delightful hills; and Thornton in his foreign tour cast his eye back, for the sake of comparison, to "the beautifully undulating country around Saffron Walden." The same smiling lands will, we trust, continue to interest many beholders, while we know from experience that few, very few, among its residents in our times, see more to attract them in even the most favoured portions of our isle. This breathes of the love of country and our father-land; and sincerely do we pray that in this age of wondrous change it may still preserve its sober character, and continue to be a loyal quiet home, where the living may enjoy uninterruptedly that harmony and good understanding which have prevailed here for a lengthened period, and where those who, like ourselves, must naturally, in the course of events, ere long quit the scene, may repose in peace.

*August 7th, 1844.*

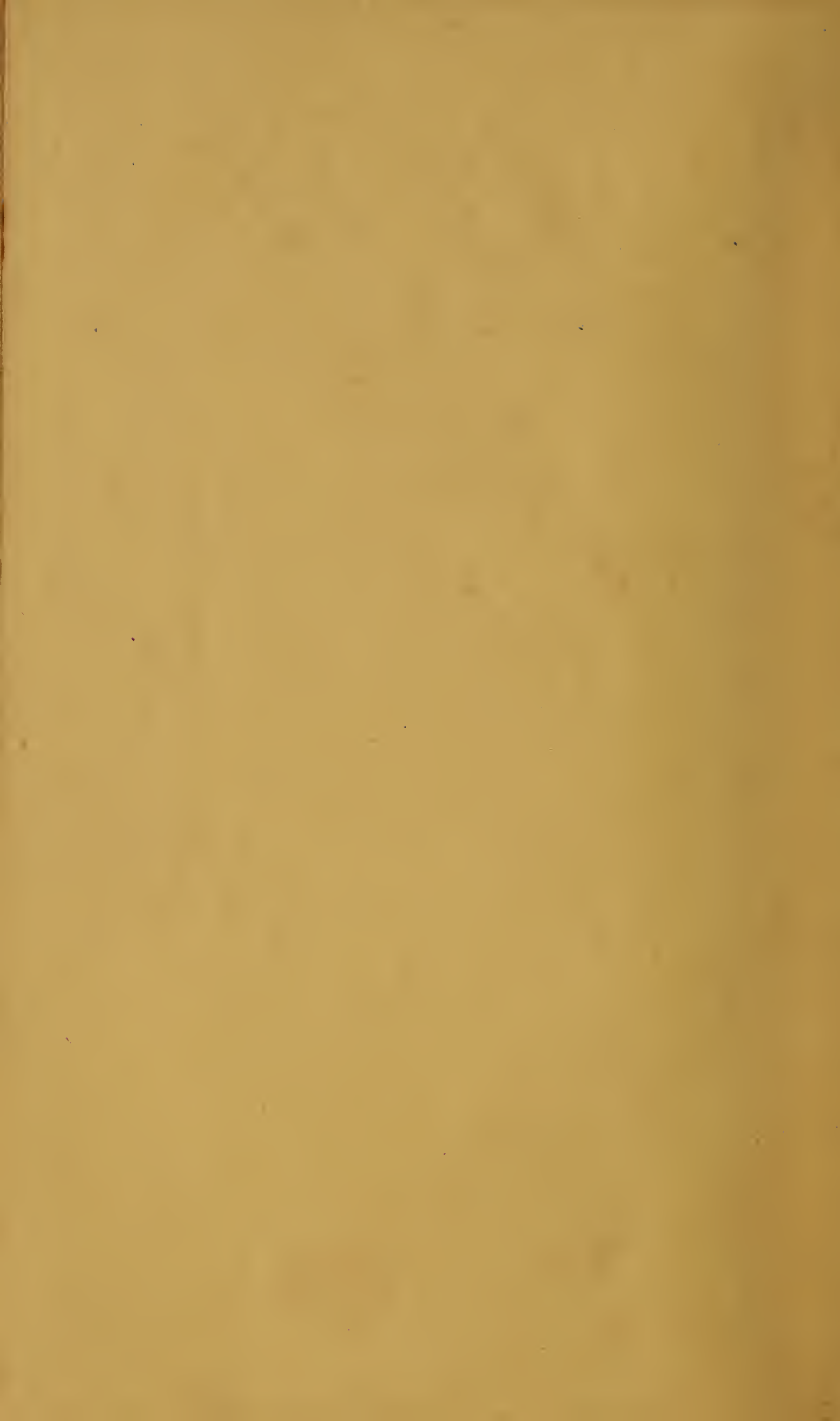






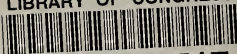








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